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CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY:

OR,

MATERIALS FOR THOUGHT.

BY THE

Burns, James

AUTHOR OF "SKETCHES AND SKELETONS OF SERMONS,"

THE "CHRISTIAN'S DAILY PORTION," "PULPIT CYCLOPÆDIA,"
"SERMONS FOR FAMILIES AND VILLAGES," "YOUTHFUL CHRISTIAN,"
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"Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk or discourse, but to weigh and consider."—LORD BACON.

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PREFACE.

It has been the Author's aim, in the present work, to present a variety of articles on interesting and important subjects, expressed in a condensed sententious style, so as to furnish useful and instructive materials for thought, on intellectual, moral, and spiritual themes.

In carrying out this object, he has chosen such topics as were rather practical than speculative; for utility, and not display, has been the principle, under which he has endeavoured to act, in preparing them for the press.

Having a strong attachment to works of a proverbial kind, and thinking many others might have a similar predilection, he concluded that such a book would tend both to interest and instruct a numerous class of readers.

Doubtless many persons may differ with him on some of the sentiments expressed, and may probably dispute the conclusions to which the writer often arrives. He can only say that he has laboured to

speak out the honest convictions of his mind. But in doing so, would fain hope, that he has ever displayed a spirit of moderation and candour, towards those who may entertain opinions different to his own.

It has been his sincere aim to exhibit truth, and truth only, and he has laboured to do this in as brief and forcible a manner as possible.

He has been anxious that his book should be rather a book of ideas, than one of wordy arguments and illustrations; and he sincerely desires that it may be the humble instrument, under the divine blessing, of extending a knowledge of many important truths which are too liable to be forgotten.

He has endeavoured to arrange the subjects in such order, that the reader will be led to perceive, the obvious connexion which many of them have with each other, so as to form a compendium of practical Christian Philosophy, for the consideration of inquiring and reflective minds.

London, 1845.

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CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

TRUTH.

Truth is to fact what the impress is to the seal, the exact transcript.

Truth is of universal application; it is the uniting principle which holds together the moral elements of the universe.

Truth is one of the bright characteristics of Deity, and one of the main pillars by which his throne is supported. His works are all exhibitions of truth; his providence its continuous exercise; and his word the revelation of it to mankind.

The gospel is both a system of grace and truth; inflexibly true in its exactions on the surety, and gracious in the bestowment of its blessings to the redeemed.

Acceptance of the truth bursts the bond-man's fetters, and liberates the moral captive; and a retention of the truth is the condition of the charter on which all our spiritual blessings are suspended.

The penitent is prostrate in the porch of the temple of truth; the believer walks in the light that encircles the holy place; and the beatified only can bear the full blaze of the holiest of all.

Truth hearkens with candour, reflects with deliberation, and utters with precision. In matters of conceived trifling import, truth is as the private path which leads to the king's royal highway.

Truth, however minute the particles, is too precious to be lost; and he only will be truly enriched with it who imitates the goldsmith, who causeth even the smallest grains of the precious metal to be carefully preserved.

Truth often prefers the cottage to the mansion, and is frequently seen in company with plain attire. The poor sometimes make her welcome to their mud-formed cabin, while she is excluded from the palaces of kings.

Truth can live in all regions, flourish in all soils, and become naturalized in all climes.

It was the spirit of truth which animated the first martyr Abel, which shone in the pathway of the holy Enoch, and which adorned the Hebrew captive in the land of Egypt. It spake through Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh, triumphed in the illustrious events of the Red sea, and was the chorus to the song of Miriam.

Adherence to truth, the seven times heated furnace could not consume, nor the hungry lions destroy.

John the Baptist heralded its prince, and called upon men to give it a reverential reception. Thus uttered by a man of plain exterior, and stern manner, and rigid self-denial, yet it softened hundreds of Jewish hearts, and the waters of the Jordan testified to its virtue and influence.

Blessed are they whom the truth causeth to mourn, for they shall verily be comforted, and all her disciples are happy indeed.

In Jesus Christ truth was embodied; it flowed like silvery streams from his hallowed lips, and no man ever spake like that man. Truth shone with lustre in the actions of his life, and that life was sacrificed to establish its empire in our world. It was his bosom companion mid the agonies of Gethsemane; he bore witness to it in the presence of Pilate; and it was transfixed with him on the cross of Calvary.

The mantle of truth, with the spirit of love, he left to his apostles and disciples, and by the maintenance of both, they trod in the footsteps of their Lord and Master.

Paul preached it in Corinth and in Imperial Rome, and reasoned out its axioms to the men of Athens, on Mars' Hill.

The precious seeds of truth were sown in almost every known land, bedewed with the tears of the good, identified with the sufferings of saints, and baptized in the blood of the successive martyrs of Christ. In chariots of literal flame many of the wisest and most holy of its disciples were conveyed to the heavenly state.

Reader, reverence this queen of virtues; honour her in all thy transactions; choose her for thy bosom companion, thy closet counsellor, and thy family guest. Let her be thy referee in secular concerns, and ever be found a meek but faithful worshipper at her shrine. Thus only canst thou be a faithful witness of her excellency before God and man.

Buy it at any price; its cost cannot excel its worth, or surpass its intrinsic value. Whoever possesses truth, holds an inestimable treasure, whose currency is admitted in both worlds. For it is the moral conservator of earth, and one of the prominent colours of the rainbow, which encircles the throne of Jehovah in heaven.

KNOWLEDGE.

Knowledge differeth essentially from learning, for there may be learned lumber, and unlettered stores of knowledge.

Knowledge is usually without parade, for its richest disciple is humbled by the conviction of the much land which yet remains to be possessed.

Knowledge is not often wedded with dogmatism, for the limited time of dying man's study is scarcely sufficient to know even the germ of things.

Knowledge is only really valuable as it can be usefully applied, and in this consisteth the essence of sound wisdom.

Reading supplieth intellectual stores; study arrangeth and defineth their worth, and by practical experiments a sphere is formed for their serviceable influence.

Knowledge resembleth the light, it illuminates, cheers, and fertilizes; it is the principle of mental day, and indispensable to a healthy moral activity.

To know all things even imperfectly is impossible to any one; to know a few things fully is within the reach of all.

A knowledge of letters is good, of things is better, of principles better still, of ourselves yet more desirable, of God most of all essential; for "this is life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Divine knowledge necessarily excels human, as God is infinitely holier and more benevolent than man. This tendeth to present and everlasting life. It is the excellency of knowledge, compared with which all other is tin and dross.

Its text-book is the scriptures,—its teacher the Logos, the eternal Word,—its especial themes, the divine operations, the divine government, the divine redemption, and the divine glory which shall hereafter be more fully made known.

The school of this knowledge is the church, the laboratory the heart, the experiments the events of the Christian life, its present influence sanctified conformity to God; its consummation the refulgent noonday splendour of eternity. What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter; yea, then shalt thou know even as thou art known.

Knowledge varies in its appellations, as do the various shores which are washed by the waves of the sea. It is natural or moral, it is secular or religious, as the subject may be, on which it treats.

Then as to the manner or degree; it is simple or philosophical, popular or profound. Its range is all

comprehensible subjects, whether in heaven above, upon the earth below, or in the waters which are under the earth.

Man even in his inglorious and fallen state is eminently fitted for its attainment. There is the eye to perceive, and the soul's understanding which answereth thereunto. There is the ear to attend, and the judgment to ponder; there are the senses to supply material, and the memory to store up its treasures.

By deep causation man reasons on first principles, and chief laws, and by analogy, compares and contrasts.

By numerical means he increaseth facts, and by an arranging process placeth them all in due order.

From the lower steps of the intellectual ladder, he gradually ascends to the highest regions of elevated thought and reflection.

The alphabet may be the child's first study, the heaven of heavens the theme of his manly contemplations. As a child, he may whip his top in the street, or roll his hoop on the path; as a man, he measureth the heavens, and reckoneth with mathematical precision the revolutions of the planetary worlds. From the hyssop he goeth on to the cedar, from the wonders of nature to those of providence, and from both by a spiritual flight to the higher regions of grace. With elasticity of mind in connexion with physical vigour and the cultivation of the moral sense, none but God can tell where man's soarings will end, or his discoveries terminate.

Reader! drink deep at this fountain; its waters refresh, and tend upward even to eternal life.

WISDOM.

Wisdom is that which applieth knowledge to its best use, and fitteth means for the best end.

By wisdom, God made all things in their right order, and fixed them in their most appropriate places.

Wisdom judgeth justly, reasoneth correctly, and concludes discreetly.

Wisdom gives to each subject its due measure of regard, and dignifies the highest themes with the greatest consideration.

Wisdom cannot be absorbed with trifles, nor delight in the bubbles that float upon the passing stream. It enquireth for good, and with vigour and perseverance seeks its attainment.

Wisdom asks for the chief good, and to this its most elevated thoughts, and warmest emotions are devoted.

It looketh for the future, and dreameth not of building on the uncertain present. Its chief hopes are wedded to immortality, and its most intense desires have to do with eternal things.

Wisdom inquireth what is the end of my existence, and how will the blank sheet of my probation be best filled? What is best to be pursued, and how shall I most certainly attain it? What shall I despise, what esteem, what admire, and in what delight?

Wisdom concludes that God is the chief good; the soul the chief part of man; and religion the chief end of the soul.

Wisdom pronounces the narrow path though steep and difficult of ascent, to be both the best and safest.

Wisdom builds her house upon the rock, and therefore fears not the winds or the floods. She dwells in the pavilion of the Most High, and therefore none can invade or destroy. She associates with angelic hosts, and therefore, however formidable her adversaries, she beholdeth the whole mountain to be filled with horses and chariots of fire.

Wisdom has its decided preferences, and its fixed antipathies. It avoideth precipitancy in matters of moment, and is ever ready to obey the advice of the town clerk of Ephesus, to do nothing rashly. It trusteth not to its own understanding, nor dependeth on its own sagacity, but believeth that in a multitude of counsellors there is safety. It does not hastily give credence to rumours, nor hearkeneth to the tale-bearer, nor encourageth the whisperer. It cherisheth openness of demeanour, and candour of spirit, and integrity of speech. It decideth not without ample evidence, and it judgeth not without a cause.

It is the young man's wisest counsellor, the mature man's safest companion, and the sage's daily visitor.

It sheddeth lustre on every station, and sanctifies every condition. It is the brightness of the child's eye, the nobleness of the youth's countenance, and the dignity of the man of years.

It giveth capacity to the scholar, and ability to the teacher. It openeth the way of rational subjection, and shows princes how to govern.

It makes the hearer of the word attentive to know

the sense and design of what is spoken, and he preacheth in vain, whose lips are not under its direction. The good hearer is made wise unto salvation, and the useful minister who winneth souls is wise.

Wisdom is a qualification which may be needed in all spheres, and on all occasions.

It is the wheel by which the domestic vessel is steered; it is the helm which regulateth the affairs of a nation. Idiots only are incapable of it, fools only despise it, and all truly reasonable beings prize it.

The sweetest flowers will decay, and the gayest wither, but wisdom ever remaineth fragrant, beautiful, and abiding.

The beauty of the countenance may be blasted by one hour's disease, the physical energy reduced by one stroke, but wisdom in its influence and results, defies the tooth of time, or the winter of years, or even the arrows of death.

The wise live in the region of light, and in the atmosphere of health, and dissolution is only a transition to a better and wiser state. For the wise shall inherit glory. Reader! art thou wise—of enlightened understanding—of sound judgment—and spiritual discernment? Are the wise thy companions? after wisdom dost thou earnestly cry? If so, she shall place upon thy brow the diadem of blessedness and honour.

THE BIBLE.

"Most wondrous book! bright candle of the Lord!
Star of eternity! the only star
By which the bark of man could navigate
The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss
Securely; only star which rose on Time
And on its dark and troubled billows threw a ray
Of Heaven's own light, and to the hills of God
Pointed the sinner's eye." POLLOK'S COURSE OF TIME.

THE BIBLE is *the* Book by way of emphasis and pre-eminence. The Book of Books for its superlative importance, intrinsic excellency, and Divine glory.

God its Author. Prophets and evangelists and apostles its penmen. Truth its matter, and salvation its end.

How sublime its style. How transcendently glorious its themes. How varied its subjects; yet, how perspicuous and simple its revelations.

Fraught with truths for all ages, and classes, and conditions of mankind. With elementary principles of religion for the child. With salutary counsels for the young. With wise instructions for the mature; and with sound philosophy for the aged.

With homely communications for the illiterate. With profound truths for the learned, and heavenly knowledge for all.

Its discoveries, how wonderful,—its doctrines, how heavenly,—its warnings, how awful,—its threatenings, how terrible,—its promises, how precious,—its consolations, how abundant.

It is the Christian's personal monitor; his closet counsellor, and family adviser.

It is the nation's directory, and the world's light, and truth, and glory.

Here are stores of knowledge for the naturalist, the philologist, the historian, the moralist, the poet, and the divine.

The Bible is the Book of seeds, on subjects moral, intellectual, and spiritual.

It is the Field containing the hidden treasures of wisdom; the Casket in which are deposited the invaluable jewels of grace, and the peerless pearl of untold price.

It is the Spiritual Bank of Faith; the Granary of the Bread of Life, and the Well of Salvation.

It is the Christian's citadel of strength and security, and the holy warrior's sacred armoury.

It is the Eden of moral loveliness, and the paradise of celestial delights.

Divine Providence hath marvellously preserved it; the wise and godly of all ages have delighted in it, and the evil powers of earth and hell have laboured in vain to destroy it.

It is the only infallible test of real orthodoxy, the only unerring touchstone of truth, the only immaculate code of laws, the only faultless system of morals, and the only immutable ground of hope.

Some have attempted to falsify its statements,—others to mystify its doctrines,—others to monopolize its blessings,—and not a few to adulterate its truths.

All really godly persons read it with reverence and

attention, meditate on it with spiritual delight, and appropriate its consolations with unutterable joy.

They believe its averments,—hearken to its counsels,—imbibe its spirit, and delight in its commandments.

To translate it into all languages and tongues, and to diffuse it to every tribe abroad, and circulate it to every family at home, is a work of soundest philosophy, noblest patriotism, and purest benevolence.

Abuse it not, by coercing it to speak the dogmas of thy creed, or to support thy sectarian views, or to establish thy peculiar rites; but elevate it, by making it the one test of sound Christian principle, spiritual worship, and daily practice.

Hide its treasures in thine heart, enjoy its consolations in thy experience, and embody its holy precepts in thy life, and forget not to teach it diligently to thy children, and talk of its hallowed contents "when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

JEHOVAH.

JEHOVAH, self-existent, underived, and incommunicable.

Before all, above all, in all, and through all. The source of all, the ruler of all, the end of all.

Sun of all light, fountain of all enjoyment, object of all bliss.

Creator of all things, governor of all worlds, and judge of all beings. Forming by his power, arranging by his wisdom, blessing by his goodness.

The intellectual eye discerning all creatures, the spirit of ubiquity pervading all places, omnific energy upholding all things.

The majestic brightness of heaven's glory, unmixed benignity crowning the earth with goodness, inflexible justice enkindling the flames of hell.

The thunder his voice, the clouds his chariot, the universe his dwelling.

Angels his attendants, seraphim and cherubim and beatified spirits his train, and dazzling light his throne.

Heaven his court, earth his footstool, and hell his prison.

Faithful his engagements, truth his word, immutable his counsels. All-searching in spirit, all-knowing in intelligence, almighty in power, and unchangeable in essence.

Our lawgiver to legislate, our ruler to govern, our judge to adjudicate.

Our Father to bless with his beneficence, and our Redeemer to save by his mercy.

The terror of the wicked, the nothing of the infidel, the portion of the Christian, and the joy of the beatified.

The temple's glory, the church's safety, the believer's salvation.

Melting with compassion to the penitent, with love to his children, and with pity to all.

The best friend, the most terrible foe, the highest glory to the saved, and the source of direst wrath to the accursed.

The Being, nature's voice proclaimeth, and nature's works revealeth.

Vainly sought for, by pagan philosophers, ambiguously referred to, in heathen oracles, but majestically declared, in the Holy Scriptures.

A God above me, I adore; a God around me, I venerate and fear; a God for me, my hope and trust; a God within me, my joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Near, yet impalpable; felt, yet unseen; known, yet undiscerned.

I will venerate his name, contemplate his works, consider his perfections, celebrate his praises.

As father, I will draw nigh to him; as lawgiver, I will hearken to his voice; as judge, I will stand in awe of his decisions.

God enthroned, all idols perish; God obeyed, all other lords disowned.

In him I live, to him I will be devoted, as for him I was created and redeemed.

Jehovah, splendour of all beauty, sweetness of all

enjoyment, fragrance of all perfume, substance of all desires, end of all being, and summum bonum of all intelligences.

Be thy name honoured by all nations, savingly known by all tribes, and worshipped by all beings.

Thy royal mandate, be every where proclaimed; thy right, every where confessed; and thy will, every where done on earth, even as it is in heaven.

Reader! canst thou say with the holy psalmist, "this God is my God for ever and ever, and my guide even unto death?"

PROVIDENCE.

Providence is the superintending care which God exercises over all his creatures.

We may contemplate it either in its vast comprehensiveness, or in its more minute details.

We may view it in its relation to all creatures and events, or judge of it in its more direct relation to men.

Providence is another term for the government of God, by which all events are made to concur with his wise and holy purposes and designs. Thus it includes both the visible and invisible worlds—both angels and devils—men and all the irrational creatures.

Divine providence recognizes the fixed laws, by which all things are subservient to the divine will, and redound to the divine glory. These fixed laws being based on the

infallible judgment of God, disorder or confusion cannot possibly ensue.

At the head of all the links of the mysterious chain is the ever blessed Deity, by whom, and for whom, and to whom, are all things.

In providence, as Ezekiel showeth, the celestial hosts are prominent and active instruments, ever hearkening to the divine voice, and flying with ardent delight to do his bidding.

All men in their respective spheres are the agents of the divine will, and the executors of his purposes; even wicked men and fallen spirits are made to accomplish his pleasure and to do his will.

The envy of the brethren of Joseph, and the wrath of Pharaoh, and the unbelief and cruelty of the Jews to the Messiah, all instrumentally effected what God had pre-ordained to be accomplished.

Divine providence restraineth the violence of the ungodly, and maketh the wrath of men to praise God.

Divine providence employeth the holy and excellent of the earth, to be the direct ministers of his benevolent designs and pleasure.

It fixeth the boundaries of our habitations, it ordereth our earthly lot, regulateth the events of our lives, enviroeth our dwellings and persons from perils, numbereth our hairs, guardeth our steps, and supplieth all our wants.

It has to do with our health and sickness, with our joys and sorrows, with our life and death.

Divine providence never slumbereth, and never withdraweth its influences.

It rises with us in the morning, and lieth down with us at night. It is our companion in going out, and in coming in.

It intermingleth with all our concerns, physical, mental, moral, and spiritual—relative and social—for time and for eternity.

Yet providence coerceth not, it interferes not with man's free agency, nor mars his entire accountability.

To the righteous no subject can be so interesting, except that of the redemption of our world by Christ Jesus.

Who can be really against the Christian, if God be for him? what can harm him who is a follower of that which is good? what can surprise him on whom the eyes of omniscient love are fixed? or injure when the arms of Almightiness surround him? or beggar him that the infinite treasures of heaven supplieth? or destroy him to whom God is both a shield and reward?

In the oracles of truth, providence is revealed; and in the experience of the Christian, providence is enjoyed.

To admire providence is the privilege of angels; to trust in it, the high vocation of saints.

A providence of knowledge, should be the light of our minds; a providence of power, the stay of our souls; a providence of goodness, the delight of our hearts.

Let reason adore—let faith trust—let hope rejoice—let praise be offered—and prayer presented—and the homage of cheerful obedience be constantly given.

Especially, let the providence which clothes the fields with verdure, that restrains the foaming waves of the sea, that beautifies the lily, that provideth for the young

lions, that feedeth the birds of the air, that observeth the falling of the sparrow, have our daily, our unswerving confidence, and our incessant ascriptions of thanksgiving and delight.

LAW.

Law in its primary signification may be properly applied to the fixed principles under which God has placed the works of his hand.

God is the great lawgiver of the universe, and from him all wise and good laws emanate.

Divine laws are the regulations of unerring wisdom, and must be right; of inflexible justice, and must be equitable; of boundless benevolence, and must be good.

Laws must not only honour the lawgiver, but be suited to the agents for whom they are made.

For mere matter, the physical laws are sufficient, and every grain of sand, and drop of water, and atom of air, are under direct and controllable laws.

The laws of instinct rule the brute creation; and from the rhinoceros to the gnat, these laws prevail, and answer the ends designed by the Creator of every living thing.

The law of reason has relation to man; and by this the higher qualities of his nature are both elicited and governed.

Moral laws regard man as responsible and accountable to God, and oblige him to conform to that holy image in which he was created.

The revealed laws of the scriptures are those of Sinai and Zion, of Moses and Christ, of the legal and evangelical dispensations.

The law of Sinai expresses God's righteous claims on man, and from holy beings would have met with a hearty and full response; but when given to sinners, was designed as a schoolmaster to lead men to Christ.

Christ did not come to abrogate, but to fulfil the law; and on the tablet of his spotless heart its enactments were written.

He did come to redeem men from its curse, by being made a curse for them.

The law of the gospel is the law of faith in God's Son, which whoso obeyeth, is justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Whatever God commandeth is law, and he requireth not only faith in his Son, but supreme love to himself, and unfeigned charity to mankind.

The Christian then is under law to Christ; and to freemen of the cross, it is a perfect law of liberty.

Gospel enactments include the positive institutions of religion, as well as the moral precepts of the Saviour.

The divine law is only obeyed on earth by the regenerate, by them only imperfectly, and that, by the strength of the grace which is given to them.

Divine law in heaven is met by the perfect services of loyal affections, and an ability commensurate with the claims of the holy lawgiver.

The laws of God are hated by the wicked, blasphemed by the sceptic, and are the horror of the superstitious.

An acknowledgment of their equity is the first step to religion; sorrow for their violation, the second; and a sincere desire to obey them, the third; and "blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

A sincere respect to one department of the divine law, will ever be accompanied by a profound veneration for the whole.

The laws of sovereigns and legislators on earth, which are not in accordance with the laws of God, while they are not binding for conscience, yet may be obeyed for peace sake.

The law of righteousness, and holiness, and love, shall bind all the families of men together, when the latter-day glory dawns, and the reign of Jesus is universally established on the earth.

Reader! is the divine law written on thy heart? and dost thou run in the way of God's commandments? To obey is better than sacrifice, and cheerful obedience is the only infallible evidence of loyalty to Christ.

OBEDIENCE.

Obedience is either constrained or free, cheerful or reluctant, partial or entire.

Obedience either springs from fear, or gratitude, or love.

Christian obedience is influenced by them all. A filial fear of the Divine Majesty, gratitude for God's bounties and grace, and love to Him who so wondrously first loved us.

The source of obedience, is the grace within us; the rule of obedience, the will of our heavenly Father; and the impetus to obedience, a sincere desire to please God.

Persevering obedience forms the habit of the soul; and to the habitually obedient, law is pleasant, and subjection thereunto a delight.

Obedience may be marred by tardiness of action, slothfulness of spirit, or inequality of motive.

Obedience begets a servile spirit of legality, where God is contemplated only as a lawgiver and judge, and his paternal and gracious character forgotten.

The power to obey ever accompanies the desire, as the withered hand was easily stretched out, when the man's heart concurred with the bidding of the Saviour.

Imperfect obedience is the sorrow of the upright, and the body of death from which he earnestly seeks deliverance.

Partial obedience must not be the basis of hope, eithe. alone or conjointly with the obedience of Christ; "but

if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father," "and the blood of God's Son cleanseth from all sin."

Reading the divine word, leads us to an acquaintance with the will of God; meditation thereon makes that acquaintance more intimate; and obedience reduces it to practice, and the practice is followed by the blessedness of the man who delighteth in the law of the Lord.

Civil obedience is subjection to the powers that be, to the sovereignty of the realm, and the magistrates appointed by authority.

Laws directly against God and religion, may be violated with impunity, for it is better to obey God rather than man. But to suffer wrong, is often the Christian's obvious course, and resistance to constituted authority should be well pondered before it is put into execution.

Obedience to God, will best produce a disposition to obey men in all things that are right.

Relative obedience is that which is binding on the servant to his master, which must be cheerful, upright, and constant; or children to parents, which must be prompt, affectionate, and hearty; or of the wife to her husband, which must be conscientious, uniform, and faithful.

Ecclesiastical obedience is that which is obligatory on the members of the Christian church, to those who have the rule and authority over them. Such obedience must not be blind, but intellectual; not after the order of human canons, but divine precepts; it pertaineth not to things secular, but to things religious and divine.

Obedience to rightly constituted laws, is the principle of cohesion to the materials of the universe; it is the

stability of nations, the bond of the social circle, the beauty of the church, and the harmony of heaven.

Disobedience would separate the elements of which our world is constituted, revolutionize and devastate kingdoms, scatter fire-brands and misery in the family circle, blight the church of the Messiah, and were it admitted, produce a second apostacy and overthrow among the spirits of the glorified.

Christian, it is thy prerogative to know, thy experience to love, and thy duty to obey.

Reader! dost thou love the law of the Lord? is it the rejoicing of thy heart, and are the words of the divine mouth "better to thee than thousands of gold and silver?"

THE LAW OF EQUITY.

To do unto others as you would they should do unto you, is the law of equity, as presented in the inspired oracles of eternal truth.

A law which commendeth itself at once to the conscience of every reasonable being.

A law which is so clear and simple, that none who labour to obey it can possibly fail in fulfilling it.

And yet it is a law which goeth against the grain of fallen nature, and which does violence to all the deep-rooted selfish passions which lodge within us.

The proud man seeketh dominion over those around him, but would feel grievously wronged to be thus oppressed by others.

The vain man seeks to live within the sphere of universal admiration, but if all had the same, then would the praises he receives, be lost in the general regard paid to others.

The avaricious seeketh by over-reaching, and scheming, and cunning, to gain advantages from the inexperienced around him; but how his soul feels with keenest susceptibility, if others wrong him thus. He may spurn too from his presence the needy starving suppliant, from the influence of the sordid principle within him; but if conditions were exchanged, and he were brought to bear the gnawing pain of hunger, how cruel would he feel it, to be sent from over-laden tables to pine away and die.

This law is worthy of its great and holy author, whose every way is righteousness and truth.

What harmony and joy would obedience to this law produce on earth, and how soon the jubilee of man's felicity would dawn upon our world.

No tyrant then would occupy a throne, or sway a sceptre.

No man would then be found to steal, or buy, or sell, or hold another man in slavery.

No ambitious wretch lusting in his power, would with kindred spirits, combine to carry on the horrid trade of war.

No selfish legislators would then be known, who, for ends of base cupidity, would form enactments to make the staff of life dear to the sons of toil.

No ecclesiastic would then make laws for conscience, or infringe the rights of souls in matters pertaining to religion and eternal life.

No petty despot within the social circle would claim undue authority over the object of his choice, because in matters muscular and corporeal, she was the weaker vessel.

No pedagogue would be found to trample on the rights of children, or exercise the rod to give escape to passion's fury.

No master would his servants overload with labour, or pare down their just and righteous recompense to the lowest pittance.

All men would see in others, beings equally the creatures of Jehovah; moulded and fashioned by his wise and gracious hand, the subjects of his providence and care, yea more, alike the purchase of redeeming blood.

None would despise or underrate the veriest savage, who still mid all his degradation, bore traces evident of the human face divine. Man would be the friend of man in every clime, of every grade and colour through the world.

To teach the ignorant, to help the weak, to raise the fallen, to guide the inexperienced, to soothe and sympathize with sorrow, would be the cheerful willing task of every one.

How changed would be the aspect of our world. What sin, and crime, and misery would be blotted out from under heaven. How happy man would be, how angels would sing with rapture, and how sullenly would

the spirits fallen who tempt to crime, retire to their own dark and hellish shades beneath.

To realize a scene so bright and glorious, is the end pertaining to the gospel.

As sacred truth progresses and gains the ascendancy, this law will rise to view, be embodied in the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, and by its holy energy and might, put down the works of darkness, until the reign of equity shall be acknowledged from east to west, from north to south, and from the rising to the setting sun.

THE SPIRIT.

Is it not desirable to know what spirit we are of? for the heart is easily deceived. To guard against error in ourselves is both wise and important. The spirit of man will be as is the state of his heart; good or evil, profane or holy, carnal or devout, pertaining to earth or to heaven.

The spirit is the genius of the mind, and the mental breath of the soul, and the index of the heart. If the spirit be good, then has the soul been renewed, and if the spirit be evil then is the heart unchanged.

A Christian spirit is pre-eminently excellent, and the fruit of such a spirit honours God, and is esteemed and beloved of men.

A meek and quiet spirit is of great price; but a

boisterous spirit is the torment of its possessor, and the disturber of others.

A gentle spirit is as the sweet and refreshing dew, but the harsh spirit is as the chilling wind from the east.

A kind spirit is lovely as the dove, but the spirit of hatred odious as the blood-stained vulture.

A candid spirit is bright and radiant as the sunbeams; an envious spirit dark and lowering as the electric cloud.

A cheerful spirit is as the fruitful garden, but the gloomy spirit is as the rugged rock or the sandy desert.

A proud spirit is as the fool dancing on the verge of the precipice; a humble spirit dwells as in the valley of security.

A boasting spirit indicates emptiness of mind, but a modest spirit is of itself a treasure to those who possess it.

A reflective spirit becometh a probationer of earth; and the inconsiderate and reckless bear the marks of folly in their foreheads.

A resigned spirit befitteth creatures of the dust; a murmuring spirit only addeth to its misery and disappointment.

A prayerful spirit leaneth on the arm of Jehovah; but the prayerless rely on their own resources.

A believing spirit trusteth the divine truth and goodness, and realizeth present enjoyment; but the doubtful and unbelieving have recourse to empty cisterns that can hold no water.

A loving spirit is God enshrined in the soul, and heaven begun on earth; a spirit of malevolence an inward curse, and a corroding plague.

A heavenly spirit enjoys celestial immunities ; holdeth converse with the skies, and communion with the beatified ; but an earthly spirit is that of the serpent that crawleth in the dust.

A generous spirit, like a full blown rose, spreadeth its fragrance afar ; an avaricious spirit is as the poisonous hemlock, or deadly nightshade.

The liberal spirit is flourishing as the willow by the water-side ; the covetous as the prickly briar in the desert.

The spirit of the Christian is of God—from above, and of holy likeness to that of Jesus.

The spirit of the sinner is of self, from beneath, and resembleth the image of the evil one.

Yet among the unregenerate, there are many things attractive and lovely ; so among the renewed, there are many things not lovely or of good report.

Therefore reader ! try thy spirit, and seek for the influences of holiness, which will beautify, exalt, and enrapture.

See that thy spirit is noble as the children of the heavenly king : not petty, puerile, bigoted, or stunted by the chilling influences of earth ; but rise in holy likeness to thy God—in pure enjoyment of hallowed converse with him, so that at last thine enraptured spirit shall know and feel the joy and glory of the seraphim around his throne.

THE TONGUE.

Of the various distinctions which elevate man above the irrational creatures, none is more important and striking than the gift of speech.

Doubtless other creatures have signs of recognition, and may express sounds indicative of their desires; but it is reserved for man alone to be adorned and blest with the faculty of speech. And to mental dignity, and social enjoyment, and moral influence, how much is dependent on the tongue. It becomes the conveyancer of thought, the distributer of ideas, and the telegraph of emotions.

By this, intellectual communion becomes palpable, and kindredness of heart embodied.

It is alike the servant of joy or sorrow, delight or hatred, of blessing or cursing.

It is often as the helm to the vessel, and requires equal skill and self-possession for its wise and proper government.

In the tongue is the power of life and death; to rule it is the perfection of moral science, and to aim at this should be the great concern of all who would fear God, or be useful to their fellow men.

The tongue often offends against reason and wisdom, by frivolity and foolishness; against propriety and self-respect, by the uttering of silliness and jesting; against the conscience, by insincerity; against men by falsehood; and against God by irreverence and profanity.

The soft tongue flatters, the obscene tongue poisons, the bitter tongue curses, but the pious tongue blesses.

The tongue should be under the law of prudence, and under the influence of goodness.

The tongue should bless God the Father of mercies, address him in the strains of devotion, and be sanctified to men by the seasoning of grace, that edification may be ministered to him that heareth.

The tongue often errs by the thoughtlessness of its motions, the volubility of its exercise, and the want of discretion in its themes.

By the tongue, knowledge and instruction are imparted to the ignorant, counsel to the perplexed, reproof to the hardened, warning to the reckless, comfort to the mourner, and solace to the distressed.

The tongue as well as the heart and life is accountable to God; and every foolish and wicked word will be brought into remembrance at the last day.

A silent tongue is often a twofold blessing; to him who hath it, and to those who move in the sphere of its influence.

The tongue must be placed under salutary discipline, and under holy restraint, and then to him who hath it, it will be a tree of life.

But let not thy tongue be silent when conscience and religion demand its service; let it not be muffled by sullenness, or bridled by arrogance, or rendered indifferent or apathetic by indolence.

Employ it in the cause of reason, humanity, liberty, charity, or religion. Let it not be paralyzed by the fear of man, or bribed by an earthly reward. When God de-

mands it, speak to his praise; when religion needs it, employ it for its honour; when conscience appeals to it, speak for its quiet and consolation.

Speak to thyself in self-communion, to thy fellow creatures in goodness and wisdom, and to thy God in adoring wonder, gratitude, and praise.

So shall thy tongue be consecrated by holy oil; thy character exalted by its employment: a memorial of wisdom shalt thou leave behind when its utterances shall be stilled by death, and circumscribed by the undisturbed silence of the tomb.

To those who are indifferent to this theme let the admonitions of the inspired apostle be remembered, "If any among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." "Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge, among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." For, "if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."

ON THOUGHTS.

Thoughts are the moving ideas of the mind; the actions of the fancy and imagination.

Thoughts are the seeds of words, and the germ of actions.

If the mind be in a state of incessant exercise, then how numberless must be the thoughts arising therefrom.

Many thoughts are vain and foolish, and therefore of necessity useless.

Many thoughts are ungodly and wicked; and therefore injurious to the soul and hateful to God.

A watch over such thoughts is necessary to prevent their intrusion; and holy ejaculations are essential to their expulsion.

If vain and evil thoughts lodge within us, they will produce a direful progeny of practical transgressions. For all evil begins with the volitions of the mind, and then becomes palpable in the actions of the life.

Impetuous thoughts often take the mind by surprise, and only instant moral action will exclude them from possession.

How often vague and desultory thoughts, like dark and lowering clouds, perplex and confuse.

How many aerial thoughts without substance and utility, like birds of passage, cross the horizon of the soul. How fearful when blasphemies lodge in the secret recesses of the mind, or thoughts of hate, envy, and wrath, poison the spirit. Guard against thoughts of

pride and haughtiness, as ill becoming children of the dust.

Well-ordered thoughts are needful, where the discourse is to be fraught with wisdom, or where arranged consistency shall ornament the life. Calm meditation and frequent self-communion, will do much to keep thy thoughts well regulated. But chiefly, let thy thoughts be well directed, and usefully employed, and leave but little room or time for vain imaginings.

How many subjects well deserve our thoughts' most serious cogitations. Our personal responsibility, the sphere in which we move, the talents God has lent, the uncertain tenure on which probation hangs, the vanity of life, the highly possible near approach of death, eternity with all its weighty themes of judgment, heaven, and hell.

Then again, thoughts of adoring wonder in connexion with the daily bounties of our God, the mercies that pursue our steps and have done so, since first we breathed the air of life.

And above all, the theme of our redemption, the boundless grace, the immeasurable love, the plenitude of God's compassion to our guilty race.

The Saviour's person, work, and glory. The gospel's blessed tidings, the rich provisions of our Father's house, the precious promises, and the unending glories of the better land. Now on these subjects think, and think deeply, often ponder, weigh, deliberate. Thoughts thus employed, shall gather honey for the soul.

Such thoughts shall hallow all the mental powers, and bring refreshment to the wearied mind.

Such thoughts will not lay up the seeds of guilt, or cause us anguish on the bed of death.

Thoughts too, of goodness towards our fellow men—of sweet complacency in men of upright mind and Christian spirit,—kind benignity towards all around us, and of sympathy and pity to those who suffer, and whose tears of sorrow we may dry up.

Thoughts too of useful enterprise, schemes for doing good, lessening the sum of sin and misery around us, and thus resembling in our narrow sphere, the Fountain of all good, our heavenly Father.

Reader, art thou the prey of evil thoughts? do they bind and lead thee captive at their pleasure? or hast thou by the strength of grace divine obtained the mastery? are all thy thoughts subjected to the will of him who lives and reigns in every Christian's heart?

Say not that thoughts are undeserving of thy constant care, or are beneath thy serious vigilance; for let it be remembered, that by thoughts, not actions, evil entered heaven, dethroned the ambitious host, and cast them with their leader down to the regions of fell despair and horror.

ON WAR AND PEACE.

War has dinned the world, and crimsoned the earth, and cursed our species for ages upon ages.

Whence originate wars, but from base passions, ambitious projects, and despotic influences?

War is often the production of maddened rashness, offended pride, or avaricious lust. Men have fought to gain a name, to display their heroism, or to grasp the possessions of others.

The martial calling has been misnamed brave, the battle-field misnamed glorious, and warriors misplaced among the worthies of mankind.

What has war effected, and what are the results which follow in its train? Agricultural sterility, commercial depression, national inthralment, social woe, physical suffering, and the unalleviated agonizing pangs of myriads.

See the battle-field strewed with the wounded, the dying, and the dead. What indignity is offered to the remains of immortals, what anguish to survivors, what a carnival for hell.

Desolated countries, sacked cities, burning dwellings, violated women, and despairing widows and orphans.

How the vulture scents out the putrescence; how the wild beast tracks the imprints of blood; and how the birds of the air and the beasts of the field are gloated with the carcases of human victims.

The sound of trumpets, the clash of arms, and the roaring of the cannon, may excite for a season; but re-

flection must follow, both to surviving conquerors and the conquered. The avenues of death choked with subjects, and myriads of dark and guilty spirits, crowding in fearful horror into the region of hades.

Oh war! thou curse of the world—thou bane of man—thou insult to reason—thou rebel against heaven! thy destiny is predicted, thy doom marked out; for thou shalt yet be hated, reprobated, abhorred, and only remembered as a woe and as a blight that has passed away for ever. For the nations shall not learn war any more.

Peace, we bid thee welcome! seated in the car of mercy, wearing thy chaplet of flowers, and waving thine olive branch of amity and love.

How heavenly thy countenance, how sweet thy songs, how blissful thy triumphs.

How pride withers at thy approach, and selfishness before the lustre of thine eyes. How turbulence and passion subside at thy bidding.

How envy and malevolence flee before thee.

How desolated places are built up in thy dominions; how the wilderness blossoms as the rose; how trade prospers, and the arts flourish; how civilization advances, and knowledge is diffused, and pure religion promulged.

How women bless thee, and children play within the circle of thy brightness.

The lamb and the dove are thy symbols, and joy and blessedness thy attendants.

Thy prince is king Messiah; thy philosophy, the principles of the gospel; thy reign, the administration of goodness; thy spirit, the spirit of the Holy one; thy friends, the disciples of the cross.

To man's heart thou art a welcome resident; to the social circle, the patron saint; to the sanctuary, the pledge of prosperity; to the nation, its mightiest bulwark; and to the world, its jubilee of rest and rejoicing.

May the civilized bow to thy authority; may the savage learn thy value! and may all men praise thy worth! May thy reign be universal and everlasting!

ON LOVE.

Charity or love holds a pre-eminent distinction in the Christian system, and in the oracles of truth. All the commandments of the moral code are fulfilled, in love to God and love to man.

The supreme love of Deity involves the sublime thought of entire consecration to him, delight in him, and reverence for him.

Love to God, fears with holy filial fear his majesty and glory. It hears with holy awe his sovereign will and pleasure. It loves his statutes; and his ordinances and laws, obeys with cheerful joy.

Love seeks to please him always; and counts his smile a present heaven, and his loving-kindness better far than life.

Love walks before him in sincerity of heart, and holiness of life. Love holds sweet communion with him, and ever seeks a perfect likeness to him.

Such love hastens to acts of self-denial, and counts all things but loss, contrasted with his peace bestowed, that far surpasseth all our knowledge.

Love extols his name and attributes, and spends a blissful life of cheerful praise.

Love thirsts and longs to see him in the glorified humanity of his Son. This love to God in saints, is kindred with the flaming hallowed emotions of seraphim and cherubim; except this difference, that its highest notes of wondering praise refer to Calvary.

Where love to God exists in purity and truth, there will be love to man. For who can love his God—invisible, and not love him, the creature of his hand, our fellow-brother who stands before our gaze.

Love pure and celestial, flows in gushing streams, to its own native ocean; but on its course it fills the earthly channel with its waters, and fertilizes all on every side.

Love in its upward, pure reflection, is grand and wonderously sublime: and how sweet and radiant in its beams of goodness, as they beautify and bless the human sphere.

Love to our fellow-men, is gentleness embodied, and is full of pity, kindness, and benignity.

It ever feels for human suffering, and ne'er forgets to sympathize with tears and sorrow. Its bowels yearn o'er human misery, and it joys to ease one sigh of anguish, or remove one want of keen adversity.

It feels with powerful emotion, it speaks with earnest goodness, and relieves with prompt and holy pleasure and delight.

This love is full of candid confidence—thinketh no

evil except where it is manifest. It rejoiceth not in human frailty, but construes kindly all it knows and hears.

It is not a spasmodic effort, produced by witnessing some dire calamity, but the abiding inward light and warmth of heaven!

Contrast it with cold selfishness, that northern frigid zone, that sea of icebergs. This, the genial clime of fertile beauty. That, contracts the bosom, chills the heart, and paralyzes all the powers of action. This, expands, softens, cheers, blesses, and gives feet of swiftness, and soaringwings that leave a cold and calculating world far, farbeneath.

Love as it emanates from Deity, conforms the possessor to his benignant likeness. It blesseth him who hath it, with a constant spring of pure enjoyment, and gives to every deed of goodness, the fragrant odour of true piety.

Heaven is the realm of love; and this blends all its blest society in bonds of amity divine.

This love once lived on earth, and taught its glorious truths and benign principles to men. And having lived mid miracles of gracious splendour; suspended on the cross, it died to bless and save a guilty world.

The spirit of love Jesus sent down on all his holy followers to rest. This, is the evidence of saintship, the badge of all Emanuel's true disciples. This, the summit of New Testament perfection, the end of law and gospel, the fruit alike of holy grace and precious blood. The atmosphere alone where piety can breathe, or grow, or live.

Let the proud sectary boast of his faultless creed, the strict adherence to the rites of holy writ, of apostolical succession, or a practice pure and blameless as those first

of gospel preachers to mankind; yet if love be wanting, all is valueless and vain.

Let men who seek the praise of fellow-mortals, give their alms in rich profusion, or pant to tread the martyr's blood imprinted steps. Yet without love, the whole is worthless pageantry, and shall perish in the fires of its own kindling.

Let rigid acts of personal severity be performed, an ascetic life pursued, and let the fame of high and deep and comprehensive sanctity be trumpeted abroad; yet this is but a cold putrescent corpse, if love be wanting there.

Christian! thy God is love. Christ, that love enshrined in thine own nature: religion, the spirit of the Saviour's love within thee: and for this, no substitute in earth or heaven is found.

See to it, thy love is pure and heavenly, in its nature sincere and guileless, the principle of all thy piety towards God, and kindness to thy fellow men.

This exotic of celestial growth, cherish with tenderness and care, fan its desires, and keep it burning on the altar of thy soul. With shining gifts or splendid talents thou mayest dispense, and many graces too are only needful in a world of sin and imperfection. Faith will expire amidst the splendours of the burning throne; and hope be lost in the ocean of fruition's joys; and patience ne'er be known where all is rapture; but love with increased radiant beauty, will adorn the family of God in heaven for evermore.

Extinguish this, and all the rapturous songs of the beatified would cease! extinguish this, and heaven itself would be no more!

ON FREEDOM.

Freedom not lawlessness,—freedom not equality.

Freedom of limb,—freedom of thought,—freedom of speech.

Freedom to every tribe—and every colour—and every class.

Freedom from despotical rule,—freedom from democratical tyranny,—freedom from the terrors of the mobocracy.

Freedom to breath the air of liberty, freedom to dispose of my toils, freedom to improve my intellect, freedom to exercise my political rights, freedom to live, and labour, and think, and act as a man, all the world over.

Freedom in the state, from partial laws, and restricted enactments, and inquisitorial annoyances, and franchised disabilities.

Freedom ecclesiastical, to read the eternal oracles, to labour to comprehend their meaning, to judge of their truths, and to worship as the dictates of an enlightened conscience would suggest.

Freedom to praise and pray, to speak or hear in things divine, not as a matter of toleration, but inherent right, one of the richest boons of heaven to man.

Freedom to support that form of religion that harmonizes most with my mind, enlarges most my heart, and betters most my life.

Freedom from the fangs of state persecution, ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and star-chamber oppression. Freedom

from tithe, and tax, and rate, as by human law enacted on the whole, for the benefit of the few.

Freedom for every one around the domestic hearth, from petty tyranny, and domestic intolerance.

Freedom in the work-shop, for the sons of toil, from coercive customs, iniquitous fines, and intemperate associations.

Freedom of soul from the domination of ignorance, the fetters of vice, the influence of the world, and the vassalage of Satan.

Freedom from the spirit of discontent, from the remains of the carnal mind, from the body of sin and death.

Freedom—perfect freedom! Freedom everlasting! Whom the Son makes free, they are free indeed.

The man who is not free, exists, but does not live.

The assailer of freedom insults his own nature, degrades his species, mocks his Saviour, disgraces religion, and attacks the government of God. Down, down with slavery of every kind—the slavery of colour, the slavery of class, the slavery of ignorance, the slavery of intolerance.

Her dominion is built on proud assumption, sustained by fiendish cruelty, and perpetuated by the idolatry of self.

Freedom, freedom! to Columbia's sons. Freedom to Afric's tribes. Freedom to the Russian serf. Freedom to Poland's exiles, and freedom to Erin's millions. Freedom, freedom! Waft, waft ye winds the strains of liberty to every continent and island of our globe, to every home and hearth, to every child of man.

ON SUPERSTITION.

Superstition, the offspring of ignorance, the slave of credulity, and alike the cause and the victim of fear: Darkness its region, mystery its costume, idolatry its patron, and degradation its result.

The instrument of Satan, the caterer of priestcraft, and the curse of its votaries.

It is alike the agent of the magician, the wand of the wizard, the ally of the rain-maker, the hope of the enchanter, and the patron of the juggler.

It darkens the understanding, perverts the judgment, bribes the conscience, agitates the passions, and hardens the heart.

It prostrates the intellect, enervates the faculties, and is the blight of the soul.

It revels in fancies, is the patron of dreams, and tradeth in omens.

It beholdeth spectres, it heareth fearful monitions, and anticipateth horrors.

It is conversant with the stars, observeth the winds, and prognosticateth the seasons.

It exileth pleasure, extinguisheth hope, and paralyzeth exertion.

It is the chief ally of the wicked one, the bane of the heathen, and the main pillar of papistry.

It decrieth reading, forbids private judgment, and hateth improvements.

Its fetters are strong, its citadels numberless, and its influence almost universal.

Its ascendency is awful, its customs hideous, its rites sanguinary, its attendant and its consummation, everlasting burnings.

Light, its antidote—knowledge, its antagonist—truth, its destroyer.

The Bible has held it up to abhorrence, and revealed religion shall annihilate it.

Its days are numbered, its doom pronounced, its overthrow certain.

Reader! art thou free from it? is the spell entirely broken, the charm radically dissolved, the poison thoroughly exterminated?

Forget not that it libels thy God, therefore, abhor it. It is of the serpent of hell, therefore, repel it. It is the incubus of the church, therefore, with holy heroism assail it; it is the ignoble brand of thy species, therefore, spare it not, but seek its utter and eternal destruction.

ON LIGHT.

Light, the first-born of material creatures, which shone forth at the omnific bidding of Jehovah. "For God said, Let there be light, and there was light."

How subtle its nature, how radiant with beauty, how pure its essence, and how rapid its velocity.

Its properties and uses have not yet been fully discovered; but it is evidently the medium of vision, a cause of vegetation, and source of health and activity to our world.

It is the painter of colours, and the adorner of nature, and the element of day.

Without it, the earth would be one dreary cavern, and the globe one gloomy prison.

How gentle its rays, how benignant its beams, how cheering its influence!

It is the soul of the material universe, the rejoicing of man, and the welcome visiter to most of the inferior creatures.

The birds sing its welcome dawning, the flower openeth to inhale its sweetness, and the cattle of the field express their gladness at its approach.

How joyously it is hailed by the tempest-tossed mariner, by the wakeful invalid, and the early traveller!

In itself, one of the best gifts of heaven, and one of the brightest resemblances of its Creator.

Symbol of the divine knowledge, the divine purity, and the divine benevolence. For he is the Father of lights.

Symbol of the heavenly Teacher, and the world's Redeemer; for he is the Light of the world.

Symbol of the saints of the Most High; for they are the children of the light and of the day.

Symbol of intelligence, truth, and piety; for the path of the just is as the shining light.

Symbol of joy and felicity; for light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.

Symbol of God's favour and salvation; "cause thy face to shine upon us, and so we shall be saved."

Symbol of the earth's millennial glory; for the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun as the light of seven days.

Symbol of the blissful enjoyments of heaven, "For the Lord is its everlasting light and glory;" and "there is no night there."

It is the mandate of heaven, "let light be," and all holy intelligences favour its diffusion.

Let the light of science, and philosophy, and letters, exalt to intellectuality every nation of the earth.

Let the light of truth disperse the errors of superstition and ignorance from our world.

Let the light of revelation illumine with saving rays, every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue.

Let the light of celestial favour form the day of hope and rejoicing in every heart of man.

Let light be diffused from the printing press—from the village school—from the college—from the institutions of science, and from the sanctuary of religion.

Let the monarch and the subject, the legislator and the governed, the rich and the poor, all unite for its diffusion.

Let the parent at home, the teacher in the school, the preacher in the pulpit, all labour for its promulgation.

Light of every kind, in every form, on every subject, and for every man. Satan and his compeers only hate it, despots only dread it, and the savage and the vicious only despise it.

Let it prevail, and ignorance will be annihilated, and crime decreased, toil lightened, and suffering alleviated.

Let it be the resident of the mind—the favourite guest of the family—the angel of the church—as it will be the joy of the earth, and the glory of heaven.

SECTARIANISM.

Sectarianism is that spirit which actuates the religious partizan, to elevate the peculiar distinctions of his own creed to the deterioration of Christians of all other persuasions.

A sectarian instead of giving importance to all principles, according to their real value and position in the Christian system, generally reverses this order which reason and philosophy would recommend; and cries up only the really unimportant littlenesses of his own party.

A sectarian is of necessity a little thing, having to do with little things, but exhibiting a great deal of pomp in their arrangement and defence.

Sectarianism does not so much seek the glory of the founder of Christianity, but the honour and emblazonment of the author of its peculiarities; as it lauds Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or Luther, or Calvin, or Wesley.

Sectarianism has its own Shibboleth, and sometimes its own costume, and always the peculiar phraseology of its own isolated religious province.

Sectarianism too, has its anathemas; and the most severe are generally directed against those, who in the main agree with it, but who do not happen to accord with all its minor views or technicalities of expression.

Sectarianism appeals extensively to human authority; as for instance, to the fathers or councils, or men of their own party, famous for theological acumen or polemical skill.

Sectarianism began at Corinth during the age of the apostles, and has run parallel with the church of Christ to the present day.

Its name is legion, and like the fabled chamelion, it is ever changing its colours.

It is doubtful if any of the various forms of Christianity are free from it; for its spirit pervades all religious assemblies, and its advocates are to be found in all ecclesiastical communities.

Sectarianism is often traceable to imperiousness of spirit, assuming to itself a right of judgment, which equally belongs to all rational beings.

With the thorough sectarian, charity is at discount; forbearance repudiated as sickly sentimentality; and truth all and in all,—that is, in reality the truth of their own dogmas.

The sectary narrows the divinely narrow path of salvation, and makes the strait gate only just wide enough for the disciples of his own school.

The sectarian may be learned, but it is not the intelligence of revelation; he may be logical, but it is that of the schools, and inharmonious with the simple spirit of the gospel, or the teachings of the Saviour.

The sectarian is often zealous and vehement like the pharisees of old, ready to compass sea and land to make one proselyte.

The antidote to sectarianism is a thorough knowledge of the great principles of the gospel, candour to see the influence of these on others, and ingenuousness to confess it, and charity to rejoice in it.

It may be assumed that there is no form of Christianity so polluted, but it retains some purity; or so corrupt, but it may embody much that is genuine and excellent; or so apostate from the line of the apostles, but may have many heaven-accepted disciples in it.

Sectarianism has been the bane of all ages, the distraction of all countries, and plague spot of all denominations.

To remedy it, men have recommended a uniformity; the very thing that nature abhorreth, and reason avers to be among the impossibles. Others have propounded a scheme of comprehensive liberality, which should admit all men to be Christians who profess it, and no truth to be essential which is cavilled at. Such a remedy would certainly destroy sectarianism, but Christianity would as inevitably be consumed in its ashes.

Revelation proposes a remedy, simple, appropriate,

and effective, it is "unity of spirit," or catholicity of feeling, maintained inviolably in "the bonds of peace."

When all men cherish unfeigned love in their hearts, which is the very heart of Christianity—towards all the disciples of Jesus; then will men be attracted by the delightful scene, and the world will be constrained to believe that the author of such a religion was the Sent of the Father of mercies, that he might bless and save the world. Let the scriptures assume their intended high pre-eminence, and Jesus be the one rabbi; and love, the one atmosphere; and sectarianism would be doomed to instant and complete annihilation.

LIBERALITY.

Our theme is liberality.—Not the beneficence of self-inflated righteousness.

Not the giving forth of alms with heralds trumpeting the deed.

Not that which courteth observation, or only finds an element congenial in the applause of men: nor is it that which trampleth on justice in its boasted course of doing good.

Christian liberality is that of principle, the spirit of a soul in harmony with Heaven's own influences and laws.

It takes its rise in holy gratefulness to God, and flows in streams of cheerful benefits to man.

Though a principle of such exalted rank and high descent, yet it is humble, meek, and courteous. Its purposes are formed in private, its deeds with quietness performed, the left hand knowing not the gifts the right dispenseth.

The liberal spirit feeds in pastures of perpetual greenness, and basks in Heaven's own sunshine, and bathes in crystal streams of pleasure.

No marvel that a soul thus favoured should be fair and vigorous; should be hale and strong; and thrive and prosper, as the willow by the water-brooks.

What should be the model of the Christian's liberality? Even the rich perpetual beneficence of God. The grace that so abounded towards us, in the condescension, the poverty, and the sufferings of His own Son, our ever blessed Lord.

His soul so full of love, he consecrated in the garden, and on the cross, to save our world. He gave Himself. How wondrous and unspeakable the gift!

How many telling emblems of this spirit nature furnisheth.

How freely does the ocean yield its waters to the empty clouds; and they again, how richly do they pour their fertilizing drops to cheer and bless the thirsty earth!

The sun, the centre and the glory of the solar system, the material spirit of its light and joy, how plenteously his golden beams are scattered through our world!

The earth though cursed by man's transgression, yet yieldeth to the sower oftentimes a hundredfold.

The air, the element of life, pervadeth every place, that men may breathe it.

The orchard, with its laden boughs of cooling fruits, presents with yearly constancy, its gifts to men.

The avaricious wretch, and sordid selfling, may blush indeed to contemplate these emblems of beneficence.

But, peradventure, nature may have appropriate symbols for his case; the sterile rock—the arid plain—the sandy desert—the iceberg rolling in the northern sea—the barren fig tree—the withered leaf—the blighted fruit—all—all set forth the selfish character.

But more, this spirit has within it, its own inherent curse; this grasping principle, oft tends to certain poverty. It isolates its miserable victim from the joys of social blessedness; it petrifies all within, and withers all without. It ossifies the heart, steels the affections, dries up the channels of true pleasure, and makes the man a wreck, and then encircles him within the fearful maelstroom of utter ruin.

The stranger to this spirit of liberality, is faithless to his God, a living misery, and a nuisance in the world.

The liberal are truly blest and dignified; their path like that of opening day, shines brighter onwards to meridian noon.

And what a world is this for liberality to bless! what poverty to help, what sorrow to relieve, what sympathy to give, what misery to assuage, what suffering to annihilate!

And he who lighteneth but one cheerless room, removes one source of sorrow, and makes one mourning spirit happy, hath not lived in vain.

But in this course of duty oft to walk, and in these acts of goodness to abound, is the true end of life: and

life thus spent shall please our Heavenly Father, and bring unnumbered blessings on our souls.

Be liberal then in heart, in practice of well doing, and also let thy spirit feel no galling chains of bigotry or base intolerance.

Think for thyself and let thy fellows all around thee, enjoy with thee the common birth-right of our race.

Judge not another; assume no lordly airs of supercilious consequence. Where thou canst not praise, be slow to blame; where much may cause to fear, still kindly hope; and where no hope with safety can be cherished, pass not thou sentence; but leave the sequel to the Judge of all, who doeth right to all his creatures.

Besides the excellency of this spirit, it will be to thee a source of secret happiness, of which narrow, envious souls know nothing.

TALENTS.

Man! thou art a steward on probation; life thy time of action, death thy day of reckoning, endless weal or woe thy reward.

What has thy God committed to thy care and trust? Health to be enjoyed and given to him in vigorous service.

Riches to feed his poor, relieve his friends, support his cause, and bless mankind around thee.

Intellect of highest order, to show forth the grandeur of his works, the glory of his government, or sublimity of sovereign love.

The understanding clear, the judgment vigorous and acute; to elevate pure truth, and expose error, and spread abroad the germs of soundest knowledge.

Or, is thy tongue fraught with flowing eloquence, to teach and show mankind their greatest good, the only way to perfect blessedness.

Or, with weighty influence art thou favoured, to excite the mass, to move the powerful, and to draw the latent talent from its hiding, and the hoarded wealth to useful purposes.

Man, whate'er thy talents are, from God they came, and unto him the final reckoning must be paid.

Wrap not heaven's gifts in the handkerchief of sloth, nor hide them in the earth of indolence.

Apply not gifts for others to thyself. Hoard not up that, sent to be scattered far and wide.

Pervert not by thy vain and crooked mind, blessings from their true end, or streams from their appropriate channels.

Perverted talents will disturb thy rest, and break thy midnight slumbers.

Perverted talents will make thy last sick room dark with the shadows of the future, and plant with many thorns thy dying pillow.

What, if on thine ear, just as the step into eternity is taken, the sound should fall, "unprofitable servant, slave of self, execrated wretch!" What, if when thou standest at the final bar, and God thy judge, that time, and health, and riches, and talents, and influence, should all appear as hideous spectres to affright thy soul with horrors in that day!

Man! thou art a steward, and grace and wisdom both are needful to discharge with faithfulness thy trust.

Seek counsel from on high; commit thy way to God; in all thy ways acknowledge him.

Be jealous of thyself, and daily seek the hand of God to guide and keep thee safe; let conscience ever reign unbiassed in thee; set God before thee; let his glory be thy one chief end—his approbation thy most earnest aim.

Pursue not any course on which thou canst not seek by prayer, his blessing.

Oft judge and try thyself, and bring eternal things before thy mind; that thus when God shall call thee to account, thou mayest with joy exclaim, "Here, Lord, I am, and the talents doubled which thou gavest me!"

So shall thy end be peace, thy memorial remain among the good on earth, and thy inheritance of bliss be vast and everlasting in the skies.

ON USEFULNESS.

Three ends of thy being God hath placed before thee; to improve thyself, to glorify him, and to be useful to thy fellow-men.

Neglecting the first, thou art a barren cumberer of the ground; the second, a faithless servant; and the third, a misanthrope to thy species.

Our theme is usefulness, and what is thy response? Is the end of thy existence in reference to others answered?

Art thou a sound connecting link in the chain of our humanity? A working bee in the hive of real industry? Dost thou add to the number and amount of the enjoyments of those around thee?

Take a wide or a minute survey of creation, and thou shalt find in the material universe, no useless thing, nor redundant atom—no, not one unnecessary grain of sand.

All trees, and herbs, and plants, and flowers, have their varied spheres and degrees of utility.

Every drop that mingleth in the waters of the vasty deep, and every ray that proceedeth from the sun, have their appropriate and destined end to fill—and answer well the purposes of Him who formed them.

All living things that move in seas, or air, or earth, fill their own spheres of life and action usefully. But man, the child of reason and intelligence, perverted by the fall, runs into devious ways of sin and inutility.

How many are the living curses of their dwellings! How many plague spots on the body politic! How

many, as the dire miasma spreading fumes of pestilential misery round! How many, sink below the brute, and close allied to demons! How many are as noxious weeds, and wandering stars, and empty clouds!

How many, who run greedily to do the tempter's bidding! How many fell devourers of the good of others, and who madly quench their own bright hopes of future good!

How many, the progeny of indolence, and satiated vice, and fleshly pampering! How many only gorging in their iniquities, and fattening as the ox for final slaughter!

Oh man be useful! diffuse some rays of knowledge, blot out some ignorance, efface some crime, dispel some wretchedness. Let others be the better for thy being, scatter abroad the seeds of truth and goodness, increase the sum of human joy and bliss.

The young are rising round thee; oh! be their faithful monitor and friend, and train them up as blessings to the world, and pillars in the Saviour's rising church.

The poor live near thee; devise some liberal things for them, befriend in time of need; a portion of thy plenty give, and with it words of sympathy and consolation.

The sick are moaning on their beds of pain and anguish; go, solace them, weep in their tears, and rear the cross of Christ, and gently lead them to its saving shelter.

The oppressed groan, and men in bondage and debasement wear their chains. Plead for the captive, assert humanity's own birthright, and cease not till the slave bursts forth a freeman in thy presence.

The inferior animals, so called, are galled and goaded by man's cruelty; the noble horse, the toiling ass, the faithful dog, appeal to thee for mercy; open thy mouth for the dumb, and plead with earnestness their cause.

Be useful, and thus be blest and happy. Be useful, and honour thine own nature. Be useful, and shine as an example to thy fellows. Be useful, and serve thy generation. Be useful, and know the luxury of pleasing God and doing good.

MAN—AS HE WAS.

Man the last made of earth-formed beings. The finishing stroke of the divine operations; the connexion of earth with heaven—mind with matter, and angels with the inferior creatures.

In his body, modified dust; in his soul, ethereal spirit. The perfection of earthly beauty, and a ray of heavenly splendour.

The relation and Lord of the irrational brute, the companion and kinsman of angels, the immediate production and resemblance of divinity.

The world in miniature—the germ of the universe—an existence for immortality.

Illumined with intellectual light, beautified with celestial truth, inflamed with seraphic passions, armed with divine authority, and crowned with glory and honour.

His Father, God; his mother, the earth; his estate,

the world; his palace, Eden; his inheritance, all enjoyable good.

What fire was in his eye, what brightness in his brow, what grace in his countenance, what majesty in his mien. He walks erect with his face towards heaven. He touches the earth only with the soles of his feet.

His eye is blessed with radiant scenes, his ear with melodious sounds, his taste with delicious gratification. His head, how fitted to design, and his hands to execute. Innocency dwells in his heart, nobility in his soul, and composure in his spirit.

No doubt perplexes him—no anxiety annoys him—no fear alarms him—no shame confuses him,—for as yet no sin has defiled him. The glory of God, he receives an help meet to be the glory of himself. The monarch of earth is wedded to the queen of beauty; and manly dignity is united in affectionate bonds, with womanly loveliness.

His inferior only in strength and in age; his equal in nature and attributes, and his superior in winning sweetness and tender attraction. Not so robust, but more soft and gentle; not so firm, but equally elastic; not so commanding, but fascination embodied, and loveliness in the concrete.

Both were invigorated with health, overflowing with life, and enraptured with enjoyment.

God beheld them with approbation, angels with delight, all irrational creatures with awe, and devils with envy.

Their inheritance was a life one—even an undying life; its term was easy, lasting obedience; its reward, continued uninterrupted bliss.

We would linger around this scene, and do justice to the picture of our great sire, but how can a degenerate child of dust, draw with unerring precision and fulness of description, man when holy, majestic, and allied with the divine?

MAN—AS HE IS.

Fallen, fallen, fallen! the crown of glory has fallen from his head, the sceptre of authority from his grasp, the robe of innocency from his person, and the domain of paradise from his possession.

Fallen, fallen, fallen! by guilt—that guilt his own, the voluntary transgression of his own mind. The eye saw, the tempter allured, the heart desired, and disobedience broke through the boundary of divine authority and love.

Aspiring, he fell, disbelieving, he threw off his allegiance to heaven, credulous, he became the victim of the evil one.

His richest gift became his tempter, and the superabounding goodness of God in the gift of Eve, the occasion—not the cause, of his ruin. How changed the gold! how marred the fine gold!

The panorama of Eden is changed; the clouds lower—the tempest threatens—nature trembles, and man flies. Angels marvel and suspend their songs; devils riot in malevolent rejoicings.

The covenant of paternal kindness is broken, the

compact dissolved. Angels return from their embassy, and man attempts to hide in secresy from his God. Deity pursues, the criminals are placed under arrest, examination follows, conviction ensues, sentence is pronounced, but judgment is suspended.

Eden is lost. The lord becomes a vassal; and the great vicegerent of heaven becomes a son of toil, and turns to the earth with burdened soul, and brow of sweat, to earn his daily pittance.

Degradation, disease, and sorrow; suffering, pain, and death; are all included items in the curse. The brilliant lamp of the mind darkened, the correct judgment warped by error, the noble affections grovelling in the dust, the majestic will under Satanic control, and the conscience, God's vicegerent, bribed and corrupted at its post. Within, degradation; without, a wreck, and all, in ruins. Carnal in his mind, earthly in his affections, and devilish in his imaginations.

A rebel to the divine government, a traitor to his God, and a murderer of his posterity. Had he been utterly abandoned by God his fall would have been lower and yet lower, until hell had engulphed the original sinner with all his guilty progeny.

Desire for holiness and good he had none, dread of impending torment much, but of ability to avert it, even not the semblance remained behind.

Thus the tree of human nature became corrupted at the root, and the stream polluted at the fountain. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; God created man upright, but behold he sought out many inventions.

Dark is the survey, and darker still the ominous future; but mercy triumphed in the hour of man's extremity, and in the midst of wrath, the God who made him upright, and whose laws he had infringed, becomes his help, his hope, his Redeemer.

Over the scene of man's first trial is heard in accents of compassion, "Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help found."

MAN—AS HE MAY BECOME.

We have seen man in his pristine glory, and have beheld him in his ruined estate, we inquire now what is the destiny before him, and what by the superaboundings of grace he may become?

Dark, he may be enlightened; for the true light shineth, and in its restoring beams it is his privilege to walk. The Father of lights hath visited him. The light of the world redeemed him. The light of the gospel surrounds him, and the light of the Spirit watcheth to have entrance to his mind, that he may become a child of the light and of the morning.

Guilty—he may be forgiven. God can be just, and yet justify the ungodly who believe in his Son. Pardon from the lips of Jesus is proclaimed; it flows through his blood, and is the grand peculiarity of his gospel. Par-

don, free, full, entire, everlasting. Pardon for all sin, and for all sinners.

Unholy—he may be sanctified. The blood that speaks the pardon washes out the stain; the grace that justifies, regenerates; that engrafts into Christ, conforms also to his image; and the spirit of light to the mind, is the spirit of purity to the heart.

Sin spoiled the original workmanship, grace restores it to the divine likeness, and rears it up as a monument to the divine glory.

Alienated—he may be adopted. Christ brought the divinity to earth, to raise the humanity to the skies. Christ is the meeting place of the rebel and the judge. Here the rebel relents and confesses, and here the Judge is gracious to forgive, and receives with joy the contrite prodigal to his home, long forfeited by his crimes.

Adopted, the name of God he bears, the Spirit of God receives, and communion with God enjoys. Adopted, he is clothed from the wardrobe of mercy, supplied with the provisions of grace, and enriched with the promises of glory. Adopted, he is higher than the angels, the brother of the Mediator, and the delight of Jehovah.

What may man become, irradiated with bright intellectuality, adorned with the beauties of holiness, and glorious in the anticipations of immortality?

The celestial ladder he scales, is visited by angels, and it connects him with Deity. From glory to glory he is changed by spiritual transformations, until pure in heart he sees God. Sanctified in body, soul, and spirit, and

then by one momentary transition placed in the heavenly state, and before the burning effulgent throne.

Dignity, peace, bliss, immortality, are all within his grasp. The crown of glory glitters through the skies, and an innumerable company of angels wait to welcome him to the mansions of the just.

Oh man! stand on the rock, higher than thyself, rise on the wings of a holy devotion, pierce the future with thine eagle eye of faith; for now, thou art a son of God, but it doth not yet appear what thou shalt be; but when Christ shall appear, thou shalt be like him, for thou shalt see him as he is.

ON DEPRAVITY.

The doctrine of human depravity is most distinctly revealed in the holy scriptures. It traces it up to the fall of our first parents, and describes it as affecting all their progeny.

It insisteth not, that man is a partaker of the guilt of the first sin in paradise, but that the influence of that sin impaired the moral powers of the first transgressors, and that the baneful effects arising therefrom, have been transmitted to every human being.

It followeth then, that in our race there is naturally wanting that divine and original purity with which Adam

and Eve were invested, and that the tendency of the mind is to evil and not to good.

It also followeth from this, that the actions of all persons, who become responsible agents, so soon as reason dawneth, are wanting in that purity of principle and righteousness of action which God justly requireth; and therefore in the eyes of omniscient purity are sinful. No wonder then that in connexion with this, positive commands should be violated, and personal transgression and guilt follow.

To extricate men from this dilemma of depravity, a variety of expedients have been adopted, both in ancient and modern times; education and philosophy have been extolled as specifics; but we find the same traits of evil evinced among the most learned as among the most illiterate.

Human laws tend to check and restrain vicious acts against the property and lives of men; but they do nothing to restore man to a right and holy state of mind towards God.

The evidences of the carnal mind have been manifested in all ages, among all ranks and conditions of men, and in all states and circumstances of society.

They are seen in young children, and in the grey-headed sire; and they are common to all countries, and climes, and colours, and tongues.

Not one pure paradisiacal tribe of men have been found on the face of the earth.

However dissimilar men may be in other respects, they are all guilty in the sight of God, and "there is none righteous, no not one."

If human inventions have failed to rectify the heart, and thoroughly to amend the life, are we, therefore, to conclude the case one of hopelessness?

By no means; divine mercy has devised a specific, an infallible remedy.

Infinite love provided that remedy, by the sacrifice of the Son of God; and faith in the virtues of his blood, brings moral purity and health into the soul.

By the influence of his grace and Spirit, the carnal mind is destroyed, and a new and heavenly nature imparted; so that thus born from above, the delight of the soul is, to glorify God, and walk in his ordinances and commandments blameless.

Christ Jesus is the great physician of the heart, and all others are physicians of no value.

He obliterates guilt, and cleanseth away its pollutions, and introduces the reign of righteousness and peace into the soul.

He restores man back to his more than pristine purity; and makes him meet for communion with God on earth, and everlasting bliss beyond the skies.

Depravity of heart is the fountain of all practical evil, therefore, seek after a new heart and a right spirit.

Seek it where it may be obtained, and seek it while the remedy is proclaimed, and seek it while it may be available to thy case.

Say not, I am depraved and cannot help it; but rather say, I am depraved, and I lament it; and will not increase my sin and sorrow by rejecting the remedy infinite mercy and compassion has provided.

Then know thy disease, and how it has extended its

virulent poison through all thy powers ; and how practical disobedience has been daily adding to its amount of evil; and rejoice, that though man has destroyed himself, yet in God's immeasurable grace is his help found.

THE SAVIOUR.

The Saviour is the most excellent of all themes, the sweetest of all subjects, the sublimest of all contemplations.

His titles, how resplendent, dignified, and glorious! His divinity, of one essence with the Godhead. Jehovah's fellow—"for he thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" by whom all things were created, and for whom they are perpetuated, and to whom all their glory belongeth. As the Word, speaking worlds into being, and by his fiat, establishing all things according to his will.

To whose hands the reins of the universe are committed; to whose authority all creatures are subjected; and whose lips shall pronounce the destiny of all.

His throne higher—infinitely higher, than that of seraphim and cherubim; flaming hosts his servants; and the myriads of the redeemed, offering incessantly, the incense of their praise. Very God by nature, and indisputable right, yet very man by the voluntary assumption of our flesh. In Him united, the Ancient of Days, and

the Babe of Bethlehem—the Almightiness of Deity and infantile weakness—infinite intelligence, and the dawning mind of the child—the majesty of the Godhead, and the fragility of the woman's seed.

Yet thus, not by admixture, but by unison; not by confusion of natures, but by identity of person. The God of the universe, and the suckling at the breast of the virgin.

Immanuel, God with us, by his real presence; for us, in our very nature; and to us, the unspeakable gift of God.

Presented in the temple, circumcised according to the Jewish ritual, and growing in stature, and in wisdom, and in favour, with God and man. Baptized in the Jordan, tempted in the desert, and succoured by angels. Teaching as the great prophet, interceding as the world's high priest, and assuming all rule and power by the mandate of the Father. Living to express the divine character, and exhibit the divine perfections; that whoso saw him, beheld the Father.

Submissive to divine rites, obedient to divine laws, and the ministering servant to the children of men.

Beautified with all graces; fragrant with all virtues; and in all things, holy, harmless, and separate from sinners. Honouring the law, opening the mysteries of heaven, and glorifying his Father.

Assailing hypocrisy, banishing error, awing the arrogant, cheering the disconsolate, and making the wretched happy.

Healing the foulest diseases, rescuing from the most frightful maladies, and delivering from the most imminent perils.

Illumining the sightless eye-balls, opening the mysterious passage of the ear to the deaf, loosening the tongue of the dumb, cleansing the impure, and even raising the dead.

Quelling the tumults of the winds, assuaging the roaring of the seas, and quieting the waves by the power of his bidding; conversing with angels, forgiving sinners, and overwhelming with horror the legion of the demons. The reprover of the oppressor, the victim of prejudice, the object of scorn, and the derision of the vile.

Prostrate in the garden, seized by the soldiery, arraigned in the hall of the high priest, mocked in the palace of Herod, and condemned at the tribunal of Pilate.

Scourged, hated, maltreated, crucified!

Suspended on the cross as a malefactor, dying as a man, and affecting the elements of nature as a God.

Rocks rended, upbraiding the callous spectators; the retiring sun refusing to witness human atrocity; and the rent veil attesting in the temple, this unparalleled deed of malignity and evil.

The soldier's wanton thrust, terminates this direful tragedy.

Joseph's request is met with courteous acquiescence; and the tomb of the rich becomes his dwelling among the dead. He lies down in weakness, he slumbers in majesty, and rises in the splendour of his Godhead!

Death is overcome, the grave vanquished, the seal broken, the stone rolled away, the guards smitten with overwhelming effulgence; and the slain one comes forth as the resurrection and the life.

He gives solace to the Marys, sends the glad tidings to his disciples, re-instates Peter in his office, and breathes peace upon all.

He issues the commission of mercy to the world, and commands the utterance of heaven's amnesty, through his death, to every creature.

His warfare is accomplished, his work finished, his undertaking consummated, and from Olivet's summit, amid admiring disciples and ranks of angels, he ascendeth to glory. Myriads hail him welcome! The gates of the celestial world are flung wide open, and the God-man, the Divine Son, entereth and sitteth down on the right hand of the majesty on high.

Hosannah to God's anointed! Hosannah in the highest heaven, "and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

ON REPENTANCE.

Repentance is change of mind; and the repentance which Christianity requireth is a sincere alteration of our views, and emotions, and actions with respect to God.

Sorrow and confession, are concomitants of genuine repentance, but a change of mind is the radical and essential principle.

Hence the entrance of light and truth into the soul are essential to its commencement: for so long as we see as formerly, why should we, indeed how can we, repent?

If sin is seen as trifling and unimportant, or of no consequence at all, how shall we be brought to hate and forsake it?

And if God be the secondary object of our soul's contemplation, or if we live without him in the world, how shall we seek with holy fervency his favour?

The eyes must be opened, and the unwilling ears unstopped, before we can repent in earnestness and truth.

And when the enormity of evil breaks in upon our eyes, when we behold the fearfulness of sinning against God, then the emotions of grief, and sorrow, and self-loathing will result.

Anger with ourselves, loathing of former practices, an overwhelming sense of sin's desert, and of the vile ingratitude essential to it, will produce holy shame, and bitter anguish, working true repentance unto life.

And then from these, the holy, firm resolve will rise, to turn our back on paths so vile and perilous.

Then like the humbled prodigal we shall return, and seek by earnest cries and supplications the pardoning mercy of our Heavenly Father.

Repentance then leads from sin and thoughtlessness, to God, and paths of righteousness.

And this repentance God enjoins on all, for destitute of this, no longings would be found for holiness; and without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

Before the fallow ground receives the golden grain it must be broken up, the plough must make long furrows in it; and so before the treasure of celestial peace be given to man, his heart must be dissolved in true contrition, and those who thus do sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Repentance must be deep and earnest, entire and universal, it must not merely flow from fear of wrath and hell, but from compunction and a sense of sin's own vileness.

Repentance when effectual is allied with faith in all its workings, and ends in thorough, full reliance on God's own promises, not to cast away the soul that comes to him through Christ his Son.

The anxieties and bitterness of deep repentance, who can tell but he who by experience knows its painful history?

But then it terminates in peace that passeth comprehension, in solid comfort no heart can know but that which feels it, in radiant hope of future blessedness, and in heirship with the Saviour of the world to all the joys and blessedness of heaven and endless life.

A CHRISTIAN.

A Christian is born of God, engrafted into Christ, and an habitation for the Holy Spirit. His nature is renewed, his mind illumined, his spirit changed.

He is not what he was, for grace hath made a difference; he is not what he desires to be, for grace is not yet perfected; he is not what he shall be, for grace shall be consummated in glory.

The knowledge of Christ is his treasure; the mind of Christ his evidence; the love of Christ his song; conformity to Christ his life; to be with Christ his pre-eminent desire.

By faith he rests on Christ, receives Christ, and looks to Christ.

He heareth Christ's words, treadeth in Christ's steps, and seeketh Christ's approbation.

He speaks the language of the Saviour's kingdom, reveres the Saviour's statutes and laws, obeys his ordinances, wears his costume, and lives to his glory.

The life of Christ within him, is the principle of his being, and because Christ ever lives he shall live also. In the Christian, Christ lives, and speaks, and acts.

He is Christ's representative on earth, his witness before men, and his follower before God. The Christian hearkens to Christ's teachings, rests on Christ's sacrifice, avails himself of Christ's mediation, and cheerfully obeys Christ's royal laws. He inquires what would Christ have me know, what do, and what enjoy.

To know Christ, is Christianity intellectual; to obey Christ, Christianity practical; to enjoy Christ, Christianity experimental; and to be like Christ, Christianity perfected.

As bread to the hungry, as water to the thirsty, as the rock in the sultry day, is Christ to the Christian.

The Christian is in the world, but not of it; among the world, but yet separate from it; passing through the world, without attachment to it.

The idolater boasts in his idols, the Mahommedan in the false prophet, and the Romanist in the virgin, but the Christian glories only in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Christian is a man and may err, an imperfect man, and may sin; but a renewed man, and shall have his fruits unto holiness and the end everlasting life.

The Christian is a warrior, and must fight; but he is a conqueror, and must prevail.

The Christian sojourns on earth, but dwells in heaven; a pilgrim in the desert, but an enrolled denizen of the skies.

The Christian is the impress of Christ, the reflection of the Father, and the temple of the Holy Ghost.

Contrast him with the infidel, in his faith; with the profligate, in his life; with the merely moral, in his heart; and with the pharisee, in his spirit. His pedigree, from Jehovah; his nature, from heaven; and his name, from Antioch. Oh Christian! great is thy dignity, refulgent thy glory, interminable thy blessed hope. All things are thine, thou art Christ's and Christ is God's.

PARADOXES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

In himself, a worm, a sinner, yet equal with angels, a partaker of the divine nature.

Ignorant, yet knowing all things; poor, yet immeasurably rich; a beggar, yet an heir of glory.

Concealed, yet known of myriads; despised, yet illustriously honoured; dead, yet really alive; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.

Impotent, yet can do all things; bruised, yet can bear all things; helpless, yet can suffer all things.

Dissatisfied, yet ever content; depressed, yet ever exulting; ashamed, yet always glorying.

His life a mystery, and his steps a maze, yet his path as the morning light, shining more and more unto the perfect day.

When weakest, most strong; when humbled, most exalted; when poorest, most enriched.

His life is from heaven, and only by dying he reaches it. He lies down with worms, to rank with seraphs; he mingles with dust, to blaze with glory. Putrescent in the grave, to be decked with immortal purity.

Mortal, yet indestructible; perishing, yet eternal; dying, yet clad with the garb of immortality.

Knowest thou these enigmas, these hidden mysteries? O Christian! wondrous is thy life, marvellous thy character, illustrious thy renown, everlasting thy glory. "Thy life is hid with Christ in God."

ON MORAL SYMMETRY.

Symmetry is the appropriate adaptation of the parts; and moral symmetry is the harmonious combination of the various graces and virtues to each other.

In the human body, if any of the members are unduly large, the proportion and symmetry are destroyed; and however important that member may be, its want of conformity to the other members, makes it a blemish to the whole.

Now the various principles of divine truth, should have their due and proper influence on the mind, producing moral symmetry in the new man.

Hence a Christian is not to be all head or knowledge; or all mouth or utterance; or all heart or emotion; or all bowels or sympathy; or all feet or activity; or all shoulders, or endurance; but all these must be exhibited in their due and appropriate proportions and beautiful symmetry.

How numerous are the instances of moral deformity, which are constantly passing before us!

The religion of one, is precision in the reception and retention of truth. Of another, rigid and scrupulous exactness of conduct. Of a third, an ardent and bold profession. Of a fourth, an unvarying reference to joys and comforts experienced. Of a fifth, a glowing benevolent activity. Of a sixth, a fervent devotion. And of a seventh, a constant glorying in the cross of the Lord Jesus.

The religion of the New Testament, is the whole of these; displayed in their mutual connexions, and harmony with each other.

Knowledge, however accurate or profound, cannot dispense with faith; or faith, however vigorous, with love; or love, however ardent, with obedience; or obedience, however cheerful, with patience; or patience, however elastic, with prayer; or prayer, however instant, with praise; or praise, however exalted, with humility; or the whole, with an entire recumbency of the soul on the Lord Jesus Christ, as "the way, the truth, and the life."

Moral symmetry demandeth a devotional spirit towards God, a benevolent spirit towards mankind, and a self-denying spirit towards ourselves.

It claimeth the exercise of justice, humility, and mercy; righteousness of life, holiness of heart, and self-abasement of spirit.

The moral eye must receive the light; the moral ear, know the joyful sound; the moral tongue, confess the Lord Jesus.

The heart must be renewed, the spirit sanctified, and the life upright before God. Of what avails knowledge without faith, or faith without works, or both without love?

The understanding must be illumined, the judgment sound, the affections spiritualized, the will obedient, and the conscience pacified.

Let not thy religion be all intellectuality, or all emotion, or all profession, or all labour. But let thy heart rejoice in the light, and thy feet walk in it, and thy

lips praise it; and ever as thy divine Lord, work while it is called day, for the night cometh, when no man can work.

The lively oracles ever call us to the exhibition of moral symmetry; it was most perfectly exhibited in our great Exemplar; and it is the work of the Holy Spirit to infuse the elements of it into the heart, and to produce the fruit of it in the life.

While one cries, "I am for a sound creed;" and another, "I am for a consistent life;" and another, "I am for a rich experience;" let it be thine to say, "I am for the mind which was in Christ Jesus, and for the imitation of him, who in all things, hath left us an example that we should tread in his steps."

True religion, like all the productions of the wise and good Spirit of God; is complete in all its parts, uniform in all its influences, and of beautiful symmetry in all its proportions.

Yet this symmetry does not preclude personal pre-eminence in some graces or virtues; as peculiar fidelity in the Baptist, and courage in Peter, and affection in John; but these, like the varying features of the countenance, give special identity without marring the personal beauty.

Finally, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

ON PRAYER.

Prayer is the presentation of our need to God. It may be the sighing of the soul, the contrite moaning of the heart, the thirstings of the spirit, or the utterance of the lip.

It may be compressed into one desire, or extended into many petitions.

It may be offered on the bended knee, or with the body prostrate, or standing before the Lord.

It may issue from the secret closet, the social altar, or the sanctuary of the Most High.

It may be the extempore effusion of the soul, or embodied in the pious form of words.

It may be circumscribed to our need, or it may include the wants of the world. But genuine prayer must be the ardent desire of the soul; it must be addressed to Deity alone; it must be presented in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; it must be offered up in the exercise of faith, nothing doubting; it must pertain to things agreeable to the will of God; it must be lowly, humble, spiritual, and sincere.

Prayer should first of all include ourselves; then relations and friends; then the church of the Most High; then those who are burdened with toil and suffering; then all the children of humanity, and not forgetting even our bitterest enemies—"Let supplication, prayers, thanksgiving, and intercession be made for all men."

Especially forget not the widow and the orphan, and the fatherless. Forget not the traveller surrounded with danger; nor the imperiled mariner, who ploughs the waters of the foaming treacherous deep.

Think too, of those who in bereavement's gloomy dwellings, sorrow. Think of the prisoner in his dungeon, the banished in their exile, and the bondsman in his slavery. Think of the rich, who are exalted on slippery eminences; of those who rule and bear the sword of civil justice; of all who preach the hallowed doctrines of the cross.

Especially think of those who have left their father-land; and now mid savage tribes, or pagan lands, midst deadly climes, and daily martyrdom, proclaim the Saviour to their fellow-men.

Sinner, heaven's gracious amnesty allows thy prayer! O pray, and be forgiven! Repentant soul, press earnestly thy suit of anguish; a broken heart thy God will not despise.

Christian! it is thy high behest to pray always, and never, never faint. Pray with all prayer. Pray for all thou needest; for thus the promise runs, whatever is asked in faith, God will bestow. Ask largely then, so shall thy joy be full.

If in the exercise of prayer, thou wouldest be mighty; like Jacob, wrestle; like Moses, plead; as Elijah, trust thy God. With pure devotion, imitate the man, who most of all, was after God's own heart.

Tread in the steps of Daniel's constancy, whom hungry lions deterred not from his daily thrice repeated duty. Especially pray for the Spirit of thy Lord and Master;

and be taught of him, to pray the effectual fervent prayer that must prevail.

The benefits of prayer, how great and numberless! It sweeteneth toil, and blesseth labour; it calms the mind, and sanctifies the breathings of the soul; it controls the spirit, and beautifies the countenance, for oft, devotion's glory lingereth round it; it lighteneth grief, assuageth sorrow, and mitigateth suffering; it brings down pardon, peace, and joy, into the soul; it takes possession of the hidden treasures of covenanted mercies, and makes all needful good its own; it brings almighty power to help its impotence; unbounded goodness, to supply its wants; and influenceth grace immeasurable, to accept its offerings.

Let, then, devotion's spirit ever accompany thee, when thou liest down or risest up, when at home or journeying to a distance. In road or market; in solitude or in the crowd; amid daily toil or sabbath exercises; where'er thou art, what'er thou doest, it is thy high prerogative, thy bliss to pray. And when life's sojourning shall end, and the dark dreaded river intervenes between thee and thy final home, plunge in by prayer, and angel hosts will safe convey thee through it, and into heaven, by prayer, with holy triumph shalt thou enter.

THE CLOSET.

"Enter into thy closet," said the great Teacher to his disciples.

"Enter into thy closet," says the Spirit which dwells within the Christian.

"Enter into thy closet," reiterates the experience of the way-worn traveller of earth. In the world thou shalt have tribulation; in the church, often the heaving of the waters; in the family, domestic trouble; enter then into thy closet.

Here, the world excluded, meditate; here, in nearness to God, commune; here, far from human ken and observation, confess thy sins; here, at the very footstool of mercy, pray; here, on the very verge of heaven, adore and praise.

Enter into thy closet with sincerity of heart, and let not forms and customs deceive thee; with purity of motive, and let not self-complacency accompany thee; with the spirit of ardent longings for thy God, and he shall meet with thee and bless thee.

Momentous engagements are before thee; enter into thy closet, and ponder and consider.

Difficulties surround thee; enter into thy closet, that thy path may be clear.

Temptations assail thee; enter into thy closet, and on such sacred ground grapple with thine enemy, and thou shalt subdue him.

Affliction's billows go over thee; enter into thy closet and be upborne above the waves that threaten thee.

Evil suddenly may have defiled thee; enter into thy closet and wrestle till the leprous spot is removed at the bidding of thy Saviour.

In prosperity, enter into thy closet, and let the spirit of devotion preserve thee.

In adversity, enter into thy closet, and be enriched with celestial treasures.

Heavily burdened, enter into thy closet, and cast it all upon thy God, for he careth for thee.

In thy closet bend thy knee, and prostrate thy soul, and humble thy spirit.

In thy closet, utter all thy heart, express all thy wants, and urge all thy pleas.

In thy closet, open thy hand of need, expand thy power of faith, and stretch out the wings of thy desires.

In the closet, shut out the world, and thy soul and thy God be all in all.

In the closet, let the cross be before thine eyes, and let Calvary be the rock of thy soul's confidence, and there bow before thy great sacerdotal Advocate and Friend, and on his mediation only trust.

In the closet, suppress not thy groanings, stay not the travail of thy spirit, cease not thy sighs, give not up thy suit till God shall bless thee.

THE SABBATH.

Hail day of the Lord! hallowed from the foundation of the world. Thy history began when God surveyed the new formed world and pronounced it good.

Then did the seventh day dawn as his chosen rest, and as a gift of kindness, he bestowed it as a boon to man.

Doubtless during the antediluvian ages, did the godly revere its hours, and consecrate it to diviner things. At length we behold it interwoven with the moral decalogue, and clothed with the direct authority of heaven.

To holy, reverenced sabbaths were given great and especial promises; and threatenings of divine displeasure were pronounced on those who desecrated God's most hallowed day.

For man, did Jesus say, were sabbaths made and given. To break in upon continuous toil, and lighten the load of incessant labour. To give him seasons of refreshing rest, and healthful relaxation, and greater space for mental culture, and moral elevation.

To bring together the separated families of men, and bind them round the sacred altar in holy bonds of amity and love.

To lead the mind from fading, earthly things, to those divine realities above the skies. To raise the nobler faculties to services celestial, and to give on earth, the happy earnest of that endless rest laid up in heaven.

What pious mind doth not exult and bid joyful welcome to this day! Its early dawn is piously anticipated

by many a heart-felt prayer, and song of pure delight. How beautiful is the social circle, they surround the family altar, where sacred truth is read, thanksgivings offered, and prayers presented to our Father's throne.

How charming is the place of holy concourse! where kindred souls unite in all the exercises of public worship. A day thus spent in God's own courts, is better than a thousand.

How many minds become illumined with the rays of gospel glory. How many souls receive the precious seed of life eternal. How many heavy hearts are lightened of their grievous burdens. How many eat of heavenly manna, and drink of waters from the anointed rock. How many holy feelings and desires are elicited, and resolutions formed of greater loyalty to Jesus, and of more hearty cheerful service in his cause.

How many blessings from on high, descend until the earthly courts of God are filled with radiant beams of heavenly glory. Blessed are they who thus exalted, sit in heavenly places with their Lord and Saviour.

On this high day, what kind emotions of mercy and compassion to our fellow men are elicited and put forth in deeds of pure beneficence.

How many labour with the youthful band in sabbath schools, and prayerfully attempt to lead the children of the poor to know the precious worth of gospel truths. How many wend their feet towards scenes of poverty and deep affliction, and with the twofold good of earthly aid and heavenly consolation, make the wretched and the dying happy.

How many take the simple pious tract from door to

door, and ask the thoughtless starving sinner to come to mercy's banquet, and be blest indeed.

How many sacred truths are uttered by the pious mother, who on this day labours with greater earnestness to train her infant charge to know and fear the Lord. How many end this day with sweet composure, and retire to meditate and ponder over the great and weighty truths which they have heard, and which pertain to everlasting things.

How many by the strength received on this holy day, go forth and run the Christian race with fleeter steps, and weary not, nor faint. How many by the especial blessings of this queen of days, are led more ardently to seek that temple bright, where congregations never separate, nor sabbaths end.

Then Christian, prize, oh, prize this day of God! Hallow it by thoughts, and words, and deeds of heavenly nature, and seek not to please thyself within its precious hours, but how thou mayest please God and grow in likeness to him.

Let not the sluggard's course be thine, who circumscribeth by prolonged sleep and cherished indolence the day of God.

Let it not be to thee a day of levity, of diversion, idle gossiping, or worldly converse; but this day ply thy heavenly calling with earnest diligence.

Let not thy reading tinge thy spirit with the earthly stain, but in this day dig deep into the mine of pure and everlasting treasures.

There are not many sabbaths within the short and flitting time of man's probation. None to be wasted,

trifled with, or spent in sin and folly. And yet we plead not for an austere observance, where cheerfulness and joy possess no place; but let the cheerfulness be that which wisdom doth confer, and the joy be that of those who know their God, and are with hopeful expectation looking for, and hastening to, the final day of Christ.

Reader! seek ever on this day the spirit of thy Lord, and then its privileges and blessings will make thee meeter for an endless sabbath in the world to come.

THE SANCTUARY.

"How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, for they will be still praising thee." So sang the royal prophet, the sweet singer in Israel; and so responds every loyal subject of Christ, every sincere follower of the Lamb.

The sanctuary,—how associated with recollections of ancient glory! Behold the patriarch with his rural altar of stone, and his simple oblation; his surrounding family all waiting for the token of heaven's favour, the celestial fire.

Behold Jacob with his stone pillow—his earthen bed—his cloud-formed drapery—his bespangled roof of glittering stars, and withal, the mystic ladder—the traversing angels—and the likeness of Jehovah! It was

none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.

The costly tabernacle, reared with the voluntary offerings of pious Israelites in the desert; the magnificent temple erected with the munificent gifts of the Jewish nation, with God for its architect and artificer; each was God's house, his sanctuary, his hallowed gracious dwelling.

And now, the sanctuary of worship no longer circumscribed by the boundaries of Palestine, or the locality of Zion, is every where, where God is recognized, adored, and worshipped; with the exiled band of the persecuted in the mountain fastness, it is there; with the covenanted host on the moorland, in the secluded ravine, or sheltered dell, or remoter glen, it is there.

With the little company who meet around the cabin board, or on the deck of the vessel, floating on the mighty waters, it is there.

With the rustic company of the village in the clean swept barn, it is there.

Or in the room of the pious, where friends and neighbours meet to praise and pray, it is there.

Or in the ancient and magnificent cathedral, where the forms of worship and the feelings of the soul in concord act, it is there.

Or in the meeting-house of extemporaneous services, when heart and flesh do thirst after God, it is there.

Or in the silence of deep waiting and inward communion in the Friends' assembly, it is there. Wherever God's name is recorded, wherever God's glory is designed, wherever God's ordinances are celebrated, it is here.

It is here God receives the tribute of praise, records the vow of piety, and answers the fervent prayer.

It is here the ignorant are enlightened, the simple made wise, the callous softened, and the contrite healed and blessed.

It is here the perplexed are directed, the doubting resolved, the bereaved resigned, and the sorrowing comforted.

It is here the hungry are fed, the naked clothed, and the sin-sick healed.

It is here we read of God and know his will, hear of heaven and learn the way.

It is here that men are raised midway to heaven, and heavenly things brought down midway to earth.

It is here men of spiritual nature and kindred frame commune, and God from between the cherubim doth shine.

It is here that principles are learned, habits formed, hopes imparted, desires elicited, the heart enriched, and God glorified.

I will hasten to its services with eagerness, and enter on them with delight, and reflect with joy and hope.

The meanest seat is higher than an earthly throne, and the lowest seat only less dignified than the stations of the beatified in heaven.

How precious are thy stones, how dear even thy dust, how beloved thy worshippers, how ennobled thy attendants!

If my soul forget thee, then let my right hand forget its cunning. "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces; for my brethren and companions' sake, I will now say, peace be within thee."

ON PRAISE.

Praise is the grateful homage of the soul to God. The rich o'erflowings of the thankful heart, the joyful soul, and the adoring spirit.

An exercise the highest which the loftiest intelligences are fitted to present. In this the seraphim and cherubim with all the blest beatified engage.

Their holy songs reverberate through all the courts of heaven; sublimely grand, they sound as the voice of many waters.

Not a spirit there, but whose emotions are kindled up with ecstacy and rapture. Not a silent tongue; but all in sweetest melody, in loudest strains, and with harmonious songs, extol the God of heaven and earth.

Praise adores, exults, and lauds, and blesses. How infinite the object of all praise—Jehovah. His essence, attributes, and works. His holy government, his rich bounty, his redeeming mercy, his saving grace, his glorifying love.

What mind can comprehend his worth, set forth his glories, or his countless benefits declare.

Praise is the homage which even nature doth present through all her works to Him her wise and great Artificer.

The mountain top, the verdant valley, the fertile prairie, the flowing stream, the roaring cataract, and the foaming billows of the mighty deep, the trees of Lebanon, the

lowly hyssop, the tender herb, the yellow corn, and the fruitful vine.

The dancing sunbeam, the light of noon, and night's sable darkness. The glorious sun, the silvery moon, the glittering stars, and the wide-stretched firmament.

All creatures animate, though void of reason and intelligence, express their joys and pleasures to him who made them.

The birds and fowl of heaven, the fish that cleave the waters, the warlike horse, the clean and wholesome kine, the gentle sheep, with all the insects of the air, and worms, and creeping things, and beasts that roam the forest—all, all their tribute pay, instinctive praise.

A thankless man is isolated from all in heaven, and all that's good on earth.

A thankless man communeth only with the vile around him, and the lost in hell.

A thankless man, the callous rugged rock reproaches; and all nature, with one harmonious verdict doth condemn.

But praise to be accepted from reason-lit intelligences, must be the ray of mental elevation, the warm emotion, the free-will offering of the grateful soul. Ethereal, spiritual, divine, spontaneous, rich, and ever flowing on towards the objects of its blest ascriptions.

Accepted praise must have the attributes of purity, obedience, love. In man, it must be kindled by a heavenly ray of holy light, and dying love, and sanctifying grace. A flame from him, the centre and the source of all celestial good.

Praise then thy God! and rise in bright conformity

and likeness to him. Praise then thy God! and share with heaven's bright hosts the enrapturing luxury.

Praise then thy God! and know the blessedness of heaven formed joy.

Praise Him by morning light and evening shades. Praise Him in bright meridian day and darkest night. Praise Him in thy closet, around the family altar, and in the sanctuary.

Praise Him with all thy ransomed powers. Praise him in loudest strains and sweetest melody.

Praise Him for life and being, for health and intellect, for food and raiment, for social mercies and privileges divine.

Extol his name for pitying man's self-ruined state, especially for sending forth his Son to suffer and redeem our worthless guilty race.

Praise him for his gospel, his ordinances, his sabbaths, and the holy gift of his blessed Spirit.

Praise him for his promises, his daily grace, his special covenanted gifts.

Praise him for the hope of heaven, and radiant gleams of an immortality of perfect joy.

Praise him child of sorrow, sufferer on the bed of pain; dying Christian, thy transit take mid songs of holy praise.

Praise him for evermore, for thy God ever reigneth.

PREACHERS AND PREACHING.

The preacher is the steward of God, the messenger of mercy, and the servant of the church.

His commission is from heaven, his calling from on high, his qualifications divine.

The scriptures, his armoury; righteousness, his vesture; truth, his girdle; salvation, his helmet; and faith, his shield.

His message, mercy; his theme, Jesus; his glorying, the cross; his aim, human salvation.

With a heart of benevolence, bowels of compassion, and a conscience of fidelity.

With a clear perception, a discerning judgment, a magnanimous spirit, and an enduring perseverance.

Favoured with the eagle's eye, the lion's courage, and the oxen's strength, humanity's tenderness, and a seraph's love.

Faithful to his soul, zealous for God, and compassionate to men.

Heavenly in his aspirations, disinterested in his motives, generous in his emotions, and devotional in his spirit.

A lover of good men, a hater of iniquity.

Not greedy of lucre, not thirsting for power, not eager for fame, not given to wine.

Self-denying in life, unwearied in toil, uncompromising in principle, and instant in season and out.

The guardian of youth, the counsellor of the perplexed,

the consoler of sorrow, the visitor of the afflicted, the advocate of the widow, the friend of all, the enemy of none.

Holding forth the word of light, breaking the bread of life, dispensing the healing virtues of the cross, and proclaiming to the wretched, the acceptable year of the Lord.

His subjects from heaven, in their source; of heaven, in their revelations; and to heaven, in their tendency.

His style clear, his thoughts well ordered, his enunciation distinct, his manner earnest, and his language plain.

Not inflated, pompous, pedantic; not a jester, a mimic, a buffoon.

Not exhibiting self, but Christ; Christ always, and Christ all in all.

Not the minister of mystery, but revelation; not a perplexer, but solver of doubts; not a herald of despair, but of hope; not clad in the habiliments of sorrow, but of joy.

Enlightening the ignorant, cheering the penitential, comforting the distressed, reproving the wayward, admonishing the thoughtless, warning the reckless, and threatening the obdurate.

Preaching repentance, faith, and salvation. Preaching mercy, truth, and holiness.

Preaching justice, benevolence, and pity.

Preaching death, resurrection, judgment, and eternity.

Preaching supreme homage and love to God, self-government and self-denial, worldly non-conformity, and kindness and good will to men.

Preaching the law and the gospel, grace and truth, the prophets and the evangelists; but preaching Christ as the end of all, the sum of all, and the glory of all.

Preaching down sin, and preaching up purity.

Preaching down self, and preaching up grace.

Preaching down error, and preaching up truth.

Preaching hope to the self-condemned, abasement to the proud, spirituality to the formal, and a heaven of rest and blessedness to the renewed pilgrims and sojourners of earth.

Preacher of righteousness! how high thine office, how sublime thy calling, how arduous thy work, how onerous thy charge; but if faithful, how transcendently glorious thy reward! For as heaven's resplendent orbs, or the brightness of the milky way, shalt thou shine for ever and ever.

HEARERS AND HEARING.

Hearer of the gospel, how great thy privilege; "blessed are thine eyes that they see, and thine ears that they hear."

By hearing, thou mayest be wise, even unto salvation. By hearing, thou mayest be enriched, even with the unsearchable riches of grace. By hearing, thou mayest be exalted, even to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.

But forget not, by hearing thou mayest be accursed; for to the unbelieving, a preached gospel is the savour of death unto death.

Then if thou wouldest be blessed by hearing, prepare for it by silent meditation, self-examination, and fervent prayer.

Seek the opening of thine ear, that thou mayest in truth hearken; the enlightening of thine understanding that thou mayest comprehend; and the disposing of thy affections, that the word spoken, may be welcomed with joy.

If thou wouldest be blest by hearing, contemplate the importance of what thou hearest, whose message it is, and what its import and design.

Remember too its *personal* application to thyself, and hearken not for others. Stir up thy soul to be active and attentive. Put from thee mental sloth, and stupid lethargy. Put from thee worldly objects, and earthly cares, and dissipated, and distracting thoughts. Put from

vain conceits, and self-complacency. Put from thee, high imaginings, and proud assumptions.

Forget not, humility of mind, meekness of soul, and simplicity of spirit, are indispensable to him who would be blest by hearing.

Hearken with reverence, for God addresses thee. Hearken with solemnity, for the subject pertaineth to the weightiest concerns of death, and judgment, and eternity. Hearken with hope, for the message is fraught with mercy. Hearken with affianced confidence, for every word of God is true and pure. Yet hear not with weak credulity, for the stream flows to thee through a frail and earthly medium. Thy teacher is a legate of the skies; his mission reverence, and with awe attend: but he is also thy brother, a man of like passions with thyself; therefore with candour weigh: a welcome bidding give to truth, but error refuse even from an angel's lips.

While hearing, let thine ejaculatory wishes up to heaven ascend, that God may seal instruction on thine heart.

Is hearing over, return with quiet footsteps, with seriousness of soul, and watch the seed, lest Satan's emissaries should rob thee of thy treasure. Well stored within thee, may it vegetate, bud, and bring forth to thine own benefit and God's glory, thirty, or sixty, or a hundred fold.

Hearing is feeding on the heaven-sent manna, but meditation doth digest it, and faith extracteth its nutrition, and thus its strength and blessedness are all thine own.

How many hear, and lose the end of hearing. The giddy, frivolous, and unreflecting—the captious trifler —the fastidious hyper-critic—the man who hears to try

his skill at finding fault—the man who hears for all except himself. The man who hears with enmity, and sceptically throws back the truth. The man who hears and soon forgets, or whose worldly mind is full of thorns and weeds, and thus the seed is choked. The man who lacks the power of constancy, and soon has lost the influence the truth exerted on him. The man who hears, but doeth not the things commanded.

Against all such hearing, set a double watch; for hearing is a thing to be accounted for; a privilege of highest value; and if abused, perverted, better had it been, that on some pagan strand thou first hadst drawn thy breath; or that a mill-stone fastened round thy infant neck, into the ocean's depth thou hadst been flung.

Then Christian worshipper, thou who treadest in the courts of Zion; hear, and believe; hear, and obey; hear, and thy soul shall ever live.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

I MEAN not the transverse pieces of wood on which the Saviour hung, much less the crucifix of stone, or brass, or gold, or silver, that the superstitious use as the quickener of their devotion.

I mean the sacrifice of Calvary, that which formed the efficacious offering for man's redemption. I mean that which is the essence of dying love and atoning virtue. I mean that great mysterious oblation, the price of our salvation; that which is the grand theme of gospel annunciation, the object of the apostles' glorying, and the only hope of our fallen world.

Mysterious theme! Too deep for the fathoming of angelic minds.

The one main subject of revelation; for to this did Abel's offering, the paschal lamb, and the multifarious rites and sacrifices of ancient dispensations, point.

The one great topic of ancient seers, for to this all prophets witnessed,—the Saviour's sufferings, and the resplendent glory that should follow.

All the mystical events pertaining to the Saviour's life referred to this. For this he clothed himself with our humanity. For this he lived a life of sorrow in our world. To this he hastened, impelled by strong desire, to bruise the head of Satan and free mankind from his accursed dominion.

His ears the sentence heard without alarm, his eyes be-

held the wood, and freely did he bear it towards Calvary's summit.

He allowed his hands of true beneficence, his feet of journeying mercy, to be transfixed. He lingered on it mid shame, and ignominy, and anguish, past all utterance. At length he bowed his sacred head, and mid the startling phenomena of rended rocks, and sable noon, he yielded up the ghost.

How marvellous that innocence unsullied, and spotless purity, and the mortal part of enshrined Deity should thus expire!

But hearken, and the prophets will the apparent enigma resolve. All we like wandering sheep had gone astray, each had forsaken truth, and holiness, and God; each had become exposed to righteous judgment and eternal death.

But Jesus undertook our rescue; he gave himself to suffer in our stead, and by his dying blood, to bring us back to happiness and God.

Our chastisement he bore; our ponderous weight of guilt was laid on him, and he did bear it, as our surety on the cross.

Thus from his humiliation, honours take their rise. His wounds yield balmy virtues. His groans bring songs of melody and joy to men. His ignominy and agony, heavenly immunities and bliss. His death throws open wide, the gates of immortality and endless life.

Well—well may mortals glory in the cross! without it we had sunk beneath the accumulated weight of guilt and wrath, lower and lower in the lake that burns with fire for ever.

Besides the cross, the triumph gained over hellish powers. It threw the rays of hope around our world, and shot its morning beams of glory through the sombre tomb.

The influence of the cross, who shall declare it! How marvellously it told on Jewish hearts, within Jerusalem's gates. There, with the memory of Calvary's tragic scenes still fresh and vivid, did it bow, to penitential sorrow, five thousand spirits.

And from Jerusalem, it spread its saving virtues far and wide.

Its theme amazed the wise philosophers, the ancient poets and legislators.

Its trophies numerous and mighty, were gathered from all climes, and lands, and tongues.

Barbarians it made tender, wise, and holy. The sensual, chaste; the ambitious, humble; the avaricious, generous; the polluted, clean.

Established rites of mad idolatry, and schemes of vain philosophy, it rooted up; and scattered far and wide, the gracious principles of love and mercy.

As a tree of life, its leaves gave forth healing to all nations.

As a stream of pure benignity and grace, it flowed through desert lands, and made the wilderness to blossom as the rose.

As the standard of the host of God's elect, it spread its victories throughout the world. As the basis of the hope of man, it became the rock of joy and exaltation to untold myriads. And as the moral magnet of heavenly dignity, it shall attract and gather into one, all

tribes of human beings, and raise them to the bliss and glory of the heavenly state.

O mighty cross! thy power shall bow the universe to God's authority and will.

O gracious cross! thy sweet and saving influence shall mould again the hearts of hosts unnumbered, into purity and love.

O victorious cross! through every clime and every land with conquering majesty, shalt thou go forth; and thy triumph so bloodless, pure, and blessed, shall be sung in rapturous strains by all the ransomed hosts that crowd the upper temple of the skies.

ON FAITH.

Faith is the credence of testimony, and the faith of the gospel is the belief of the revelation, which God has given of his love to man in the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hence all the writings of the holy scriptures are properly the subject-matter of faith, for they are all connected with the divine dispensation of mercy to our world.

Faith then involves the admission of the authenticity and divinity of the bible, and is thus directly opposed to disbelief, which sceptically rejects it as a human invention, or cunningly devised fable.

Faith too, is thus strikingly contrasted with unbelief, which rejects on the ground of insufficient evidence or carnal antipathy, the message and overture of salvation.

Faith then is based on knowledge, and rests on well sustained testimony. Faith involves the exercise of the contemplative and reflective powers. It has to do with the judgment, will, and affections. For we first hear or read, then judge and weigh, then assent and will it so, and afterwards, love and delight in truth accepted. God demands the faith of men in his own word, and surely "if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater."

Faith thus brings us near to God, into acquiescence with his will, and confidence in his word. Faith trusts God, honours God, and rejoices in God.

Faith is styled precious, it is the holiest and highest exercise of the human powers.

It accepts the most precious of all tidings, God's mercy to our species; it hails with grateful joy the Son of God, the prince of life, and Saviour of our world.

It builds on him as the rock of hope, and looks to him for everlasting life. It makes the precious promises of heaven its own. By precious blood divine, it gains a title and a meetness for all the precious and unending glories of the skies.

Faith is the Christian's shield, and saves from the darts and arrows of the enemy. Faith is the Christian's telescope, and brings near the things of light and immortality.

Faith is the pilgrim's staff, and thus reclining, he travels on from strength to strength, until he reaches Zion.

Faith gives potency to prayer, and strength for labour;

endurance for suffering, and courage for the conflict. Faith renders praise acceptable through the Saviour's merits.

Faith sanctifies the baptismal waters, extracts nutrition from the preached word, and feeds at Christ's own table, on the living bread from heaven.

Faith dareth foes, despiseth perils, laughs at apparent impossibilities, and rejoiceth, that with God all things that ought to be, are possible.

Faith rode in triumph on the flood of waters.

Faith caused the holy Abraham, far from his fathers' home, to travel and sojourn.

Faith it was that nerved him for the mysterious sacrifice and immolation of his Son and heir.

The patriarchs by faith, on earthly good looked down with stern contempt, and fixed their hopes on better things in heavenly lands.

Faith preserved the Hebrew infant from destruction, and left him floating in the bulrush ark upon the waters.

Faith triumphed in the overthrow of Pharaoh, and in Israel's emancipation. By faith, the ocean's channel was left dry, and the flinty rocks the rich supply of crystal water yielded. Faith put to flight the armies of the aliens; and razed to their base the walls of Jericho.

Faith shone with lustre in the lives of priests and judges, prophets and holy men of old. It dared the proud and God-defying giant of the Philistines host.

It passed unsinged, through furnaces of sevenfold heated flame. It closed the hungry jaws of lions. Routed conspiring armies, and filled the ancient world with glorious marvels.

And who shall scan its history through gospel times?

It stayed the Saviour in his course of mercy, extracted virtue from his garments, brought healing to the sick, and cleanness to the leper. It cast out devils, controlled the elements, and raised the dead.

How illustriously it triumphed in the early ages. Transformed myriads into martyrs, and from martyrs into angels. Despite the rack, the faggot, the block, and the cruel lingering cross; it multiplied the Saviour's friends in every land and clime. Our sainted fathers felt its power, and triumphed over error by its heaven-born influence.

But reader, dost thou believe on the Son of God?

Has it raised thee from the mire and clay, rescued thee as the brand from burning flame, given thee the name and nature of the children of heaven?

Is thy life a life of faith, thy obedience the work of faith, thy delight the joy of faith?

Examine well thyself, and see thy faith is genuine, pure, and sanctifying. And cherish well this grace with holy air, and sound discipline, and mercy's labour, and with the food which none but God bestows, or saints enjoy.

Believing live, and glorify thy Saviour; believing die, and see his face, and sing his praises through eternity.

MISSIONS AND MISSIONARIES.

Jesus the Son of the Most High was the founder of Christian missions, and the first and the leader of the missionary band.

He came from heaven to earth to execute it, and to reveal to dark and ruined man the way of immortality and life.

He traversed the cities and villages of Judea, as the missionary bearing on his lips the tidings of salvation.

And how devoted, earnest, self-denying, zealous, and assiduous was he in his missionary toils.

How faithful to his God, how tender and compassionate to souls, and how, in his spotless life did all his principles and doctrines shine forth with radiant loveliness.

Thus he instituted too the missionary cause, gave the great commission to evangelize by gospel preaching all the world, and speak his saving grace to every creature.

And with the mandate given, he clad his followers with the holy vestments of peace and love, bestowed his blessed Spirit in all his gifts and power, and prepared by his providence the effectual open door for publishing to man eternal life.

And with what ardent love, and holy zeal, and true simplicity, did the early host of apostles, disciples, and evangelists, go forth preaching the saving doctrines of the cross.

Through Judah's land, among Samaritans, and to Gentile cities, did they gladly bear the happy sound of reconciling mercy.

How piously they lived, and toiled, and trials bore; how they were scorned, and hated, and reviled, and courged.

How everywhere awaited them, imprisonments and bonds, so that daily were their lives exposed for Jesu's sake.

And how with wondrous power and swiftness did the truth go forth from land to land, from tongue to tongue, until these islands of the Northern Seas, accounted then in truth a barbarous land, received the fertilizing streams of hope and joy.

But modern missionaries have to go forth as those of ancient times.

Their call of God, and from him too their every qualification for the work.

With the same gospel Paul preached at Athens, Corinth, Antioch.

With the same unchanging promises to cheer, and grace to aid, and Spirit to succeed the toil, and bless the word proclaimed.

They too have all the toils and perils of the early preachers of the cross to bear.

Far from their native dwellings, mid people of strange tongues, and stranger rites of cruel paganism, have they to bear the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

In climes of dire contagion, of fell diseases, and of early tombs, do they expose their lives from love to God, and truth, and men.

How noble and illustrious is the hallowed band, the sacred host of holy men who thus have laboured in this work of charity and faith.

Among the rude, uncivilized American Indian tribes, behold the simple-hearted Eliot, and holy, fervent Brainerd; see too the self-denying Egede, introducing Christianity among Greenland's snowy mountains.

Among the enslaved and tortured sons of Africa in the West Indian Isles, behold the indefatigable Coke followed by Smith and Knibb, and a numerous train of faithful servants of the Saviour.

Among the islands of the Southern Seas, the first labourers of the London Missionary cause, mid scenes of almost hopelessness, prayed and laboured, until at length the copious showers of mercy fell, and turned that sanguinary region into a scene of peace and joy.

And there the sainted martyr Williams died, while plying earnestly his work of love.

On India's wide extended and densely populated continent, how many faithful men have lifted up the saving ensign of the cross.

Thomas, Ward, Carey, Heber, Bampton, with many more, have in India's soil a sepulchre, lit up with hope of standing with a numerous spiritual progeny before the final bar of God with joy.

In Afric's dreary desert, and regions fraught with death, have Schmidt, Vanderkemp, Kaye, and Moffat, and Shaw, and Phillip, late and early, sown the seed of gospel truth.

And then in China, Morrison, and Milne; in Burmah, Judson; in Persia, Martyn; and in looking over the

missionary sphere, a glorious galaxy of honoured names, and great illustrious men, whose record is on high, and whose reward shall be eternal bliss beyond the skies.

The missionary cause has loud and solemn claims on British hearts, and Christian sympathy.

For has not British influence been the bane of every port her ships have entered?

Have not disease, and crime, and war been introduced, until whole tribes of men have lingered out of being?

Did not British wealth and power for many gloomy years, support with enterprise and zeal, worthy of a better cause, the infernal traffic in our fellow men?

Then now, when moved to holy action, let deeds of horror past and gone, our zeal and liberality excite, and may it be our earnest aim to bear to every land, and tribe, and tongue, the welcome news of grace and endless life.

The spirit of the Christian should be eminently missionary, for Jesus' love constrains the heart to feel for all our helpless race, and by all the means that God hath given, to hasten on the day when Christ shall reign as universal Prince of Peace, and all the world be blessed in him.

Then let the missionary fire burn with incessant ardour on the altar of thy soul, and rear thy offspring in the spirit of earnest sympathy with those who preach the word of life in distant climes, and train them in the art of giving of their substance however small, and pleading with their youthful zeal, and praying in their hearts that God would bless and raise our world from pagan woes, and from horrid rites of dark idolatry.

Father of mercies, hallowed be thy name by all the intellectual workmanship of thine own hand!

May thy kingdom come, and thy will on earth be done, by all the human race, as it is done by angel hosts, and spirits perfected, who ever stand before thy throne in heaven.

ON HOPE.

Hope is the expectation of future attainable good.

Like faith it has to do with certainty, but more especially it is exercised on the excellency of what it desires and seeks.

Desires may go forth in reference to things or enjoyments which are beyond the bounds of the possible, but hope must have firm footing whereon to stand—a solid rock to rest upon.

Hope ever doth regard the future; there may be the joyous retrospect of what is gone, and much delight in present good, but hope looks onward for bliss in prospect. Hope is the buoyant principle of life, the spring of action, the mind's resource in disappointment.

Despondency suspends our energies, paralyzes mind and limb, magnifies the mole-hill to a mountain.

Hope inspires the toiling student as he climbs the steep ascent of learning.

Hope spurs the man of science in his mental ranges of discovery.

Hope gives elastic patient power to the casuist, who traces subtle reasonings to their source, and effects to their originating causes.

Hope travels with the soldier to the battle field, and fills his brain with thoughts of safety and of triumph.

Hope is the true companion of the seaman, who dares to encounter tempests and hurricanes, and all the fearful perils of the deep.

Hope is the presiding spirit of the merchant, who ventures wealth mid all the contingencies of speculation.

Hope takes the golden grain and scatters it as seed of future harvests.

Hope cheers the captive in his exile, the prisoner in his gloomy cell, and bears the sufferer up midst seasons of sickness and on beds of pain.

Hope is the Christian's staff on which he leans and rests with holy confidence.

Hope is his anchor by which his bark in safety rides midst heaving seas and threatening storms.

Hope is the good man's solace mid adversity, his cordial in the hour of need and trial.

Hope is the privilege of saints, 'tis theirs to hope in life, to hope in death, and to enjoy for ever.

Hope is a grace of highest worth; for heavy would become the lightest heart, and gloomy the most joyous mind, and dreary the most happy spirit, were this celestial flower to wither and decay.

Hope is a gift and blessing which the world's mutations cannot shake or e'er destroy.

An evergreen of beauty. A constant flowing stream of consolation. An ever shining sun. A living, glow-

ing principle within. The atmosphere of holy being, and peace and blessedness.

A treasure thieves can't steal, or moth or rust destroy.

Hope hath power to pierce the distant future, to banish clouds, to grapple with man's mortal enemy, to fling wide open the graves' black doors, to hear by sweet anticipation the last trumpet's blast, to see the rising dead, the Judge descend, to hear the records of the world proclaimed, to mingle with the happy and the blest, to share the joys and glories of the New Jerusalem, and thus anticipateth a blest eternity with all the ransomed followers of the Lamb.

Christian, with this hope thy state may well excite the envy of the world around thee.

With this hope the fallen legions fraught with rage and malice will siege in vain thy citadel of joy.

With this hope, well may holy angels wonder where the goodness of thy God will end, and what shall bound thy dignity and rapture beyond the skies.

ON RELIGIOUS ZEAL.

Christian zeal is an impassioned ardour in the service of God, and in the cause of religion. It is the opposite of apathy, listlessness, sloth, and indifference.

Zeal will in some measure depend on the natural state of the faculties and passions of the mind; some are constitutionally cold and lymphatic, while others are equally fervid and impetuous.

Religion of all things is most worthy of a high and ardent devotedness.

It involves all that is great, sublime, and glorious—all that is excellent, lovely, and felicitous—all that is purifying, exalted, and blessed.

It has reference to the soul, God, and eternity; its concerns therefore are paramount to all others, and are worthy of the most intense affection and earnest pursuit. Coldness here is a reproach, a libel on divine things, and a blight to the graces and virtues of the soul.

Men are lauded, if zealous, in trade and commerce, in the acquisition of knowledge, especially in the exhibition of enlightened and patriotic principles and practice; how much more then is it our true excellency to be zealous in the cause of righteousness and religion.

But Christian zeal is very different to that of the fanatic, which is all noise and excitement; or of the superstitious, who are mainly impelled by fear; it is an intellectual principle, the result of divine knowledge, and the immediate production of the love of God in the soul.

It is not like that of the ancient pharisees, which seeks emblazonment and courts popularity, but it is more humble and unassuming, and like charity, never behaveth itself unseemly.

Neither is Christian zeal merely the heat of occasional excitement, or the feverishness of disease; but like the genial heat of the sun, it is regular and constant; or like the natural heat of the body, the indication of spiritual life and health in the soul.

Moreover, Christian zeal is generous in its spirit, and candid in its conclusions. It is not the fire of anger towards those who differ from us in sentiment, and which venteth itself in anathemas of wrath; but it is the fire of love, which heaped on the heads of its enemies, melts down the enmity opposed to it.

It proclaimeth peace and good-will to man: rejoiceth not in iniquity but in the truth, pities where it might blame, and compassionates where it cannot relieve.

Devils burn with the zeal of sin, and infidels with the zeal of unbelief, and despots with the zeal of tyranny, and bigots with the zeal of exclusiveness, and fanatics with the zeal of ignorance, and the superstitious with the zeal which terror inspireth, but the Christian burns with the zeal of love, and purity, and truth.

Zeal is much more than a sentiment; it is an embodyment of principle in action, the fire of goodness at work.

Zeal is easily professed, but the reality of its existence must be proven by the fruits it produceth.

Christian zeal will devise and execute, purpose and perform, vow and pay its vows.

It ariseth early, labours earnestly, and prosecutes with perseverance.

It is indispensable in difficulties and dangers, and is commendable in every really good pursuit.

Yet it should be especially devoted to the higher ranges of Christian practice, in glorifying God, pressing after holiness, and labouring to benefit the souls of our fellow men.

A minister without it, is an anomaly in the church, and can be of little use to the world.

It is the distinguishing feature of angels, who are flames of fire. It was the flame which burned in the heart of Jesus, that consumed him on the altar of sacrifice; and it is one of the high characteristics of Jehovah.

It should therefore dwell in every Christian bosom, and animate the whole church of the Redeemer.

Without it duty will be burdensome, trials overwhelming, difficulties insurmountable, and devotion a task; with it, labour will be sweet, afflictions light, and religious services the joy and delight of the mind.

When we contemplate the shortness of life, the uncertainty of earthly things, the immense work which Christianity has still to effect, and the tremendous mountains of difficulty and opposition to be removed; the conviction must then be inevitable, that zeal is necessary to the diffusion of divine knowledge, and the hastening of the Redeemer's kingdom and glory.

A benighted church cannot illume a world in darkness; nor an apathetic church rouse a slumbering world to due attention to the supreme importance and eternal value of the blessings of the gospel.

ON CONTENTMENT.

Contentment is satisfaction of mind arising from acquiescence in the providential arrangements of God. It is not Stoicism, or a professed indifference to enjoyment or pain, bliss or sorrow, adversity or prosperity.

It is not want of capacity for relishing the luxuries of life, but a satisfaction with our portion or lot, as chosen by God. Therefore Christian contentment is preceded by a scriptural knowledge of God, in his wise and benevolent character as the moral governor of the universe, and is identified with delight in his administrations.

Many weighty reasons should lead to contentment, under the adversities of life: there are reasons connected with ourselves; that man has little indeed, who has not more than he deserves. A man whose life is continued as an act of grace, should not cavil at the fare which is provided for him. The desert of sin is death, even death everlasting; and it is entirely of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.

Besides, have we not had numberless benefits, rich and varied enjoyments? our sorrows and troubles have been the exception and not the rule. More, have we been grateful for the blessings bestowed, or have they not often been perverted and abused? if so, of all things, discontent is highly improper and sinful.

There are reasons also connected with our fellow-men. How many around us, more worthy, are in circumstances of greater adversity and sorrow? Visit the house

of bereavement, the chamber of suffering, the bed of anguish. See how many appear to have been born for trouble, and been nurtured for sorrow, and are emphatically the victims of suffering.

Then with our homely cot, and our plain attire, and our daily bread, let us learn therewith to be content.

But there are reasons connected with God; he is all-wise, and therefore cannot err; he is almighty, and therefore can do all that pleases him; he is all goodness, therefore he cannot be unkind. He is true and faithful, and will not cause the sons of men to trust in him in vain,

> "Then who so wise to choose our lot,
> Or regulate our ways!"

Then forget not, child of probation, he contemplates our real good, and our eternal interests. He consults our permanent profit, our moral improvement, and our everlasting felicity. By the exercise of his will, he could raise us in society, make us affluent, and exempt us from troubles; and the fact that he does not so, arises from the intensity of his love to us, and from his infallible arrangements for our final blessedness.

But there are reasons connected with the Saviour. Of what are we tempted to complain? Poverty? He had not where to lay his head. Of suffering? He was made perfect through suffering. Of persecutions? He was hated even unto death.

There was no adversity or sorrow like unto his sorrow. And if the captain was thus treated, shall the soldier murmur? If the king thus endured, shall the subject be

discontented? If the enshrined Creator thus drank the cup of deepest anguish, shall the worm of the earth refuse submission?

But there are reasons connected with time. Be content, for thy troubles are rapidly passing away. Be content as a sojourner, that continuest not for a day precisely in thy former condition. Be content, for this is the time of thy trial, the night of thy trouble; but the night is expiring, and the day cometh. The clouds that harassed thee are breaking, and the darkness is passing away. Be content, for all thy trials are but for a moment; and those that have so keenly distressed thee, thou shalt see no more for ever. Be content, for thy Lord cometh, to reward every man as his works shall be. Be content, for the heavens are radiant with light, and hope of future blessedness. If thou sufferest with Christ, thou shalt also reign with him. Be content, for one moment in bliss will more than satisfy for all thy tears; then what joy will an eternal weight of glory confer on thee.

Besides, discontented, canst thou alter the plans of Jehovah, the arrangements of heaven? Wilt thou add the gall and wormwood of disquietude to thy sorrow, and the gnawing worm of guilt to thy restlessness, and the displeasure of thy God to the inventory of thy distresses?

Man, adore thy God; pry not into the mysteries of his unrevealed purposes; dispute not his infallibility; and rely on it, that the light of eternity will show thee, that thy lot has been one of unmixed kindness and tender mercies; and that God has done infinitely better for thee than leaving the affairs of thy probation in thine own hands.

ON HUMILITY.

Humility is the opposite state of mind to pride and arrogance, and consisteth especially in entertaining modest views of our state and character.

It is one of the characteristics of godliness, very largely insisted upon in the word of God, and one of the essentials of acceptable piety.

It is probable that sin took its rise in proud aspirations and imaginings, and it is manifest that pride was one of the main elements in the transgression of the first human pair.

Genuine humility will be evinced both towards God and men; for it cannot be that one of real lowly spirit towards the Most High, will be proud or arrogant towards his fellow-man.

An overweening estimate of ourselves must arise from a darkened understanding or perverted judgment; for the evidences of our worthlessness are so numerous, that a very slight acquaintance with our own character would lead to an abhorrence of self-estimation in all its forms and features.

Shouldst thou not be humble whose corporeal origin is the dust, and whose destiny is a companionship with worms and ashes?

Shouldst thou not be humble who art dependent on God for every blessing, and who hast not within thine own resources the means of one moment's comfort or existence?

Shouldst thou not be humble whose nature is fallen and polluted, and whose tenure of probation is suspended on the exercise of mercy and forbearance?

Shouldst thou not be humble whose deserts would overwhelm thee with dismay, and misery, and despair?

Surely a child of vanity and an heir of wrath should be clad in the vestments of self-loathing and abasement.

The imperfections of the most elevated Christian ought ever to be as the ballast of humility to his soul; for in many things we all offend.

Humility is indispensable to the right discharge of the duties and services of the Christian life.

Reading the scriptures, or hearing the word preached, cannot profit unless the exercises be connected with a meek and humble spirit.

The presentation of praise or the offering of prayer, will only be accepted as they are characterized by humility.

The communication of our gifts to the poor, or the cause of Christ, or the employment of our talents, God will deign only to approve of, as identified with a humble and lowly mind.

To walk humbly with our God is as essential to what the Lord requireth, as doing justly, or loving the exercise of mercy.

Humility is the highway to real honour and true exaltation.

Humility is the garb in which seraphim and cherubim are clad, how much more suitable then to sinful and dying worms of the earth.

God engageth to draw nigh to the humble and to

dwell with the contrite, but he abhorreth the proud, and beholdeth them afar off.

Humility leadeth the soul into the valley of fertility, while the proud seek for sustenance in vain, on the summit of the barren mountain.

Humility, like the gentle willow, bendeth beneath the force of the storm and riseth again; while the proud, like the unyielding oak, are torn up and levelled with the dust.

Humility tendeth to internal peace, and the quietness of a serene and happy spirit.

The Holy Spirit cannot dwell with the high and lofty, but delighteth to abide in the meek and lowly mind.

If thou seekest to grow in humility, study the characters eminent for holiness exhibited in the sacred scriptures: as Abraham, the friend of God, yet averring himself to be sinful dust and ashes; as Job, who was a perfect man compared with his compeers, but confessed "Behold, I am vile!" as Isaiah, the seraphic prophet, who overwhelmed with visions of the celestial temple, exclaimed, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips."

Especially study the life and spirit of thy Lord and Saviour, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

And then retire into thy closet, seek those divine and heavenly blessings, which, while they exalt the mind to

purity and bliss, clothe the character with the beautiful vestments of humility and praise.

Thus serving the Lord with humility of mind, thy soul shall wax strong, and grow in holy conformity to the image of thy Saviour, and thus shalt thou obtain the meetness which is indispensable to the enjoyment of the inheritance of the sanctified in heaven.

ON PATIENCE.

Patience is a grace which we need to have while passing though this world of pain and sorrow.

Trouble and suffering are the lot of all men, and neither station, nor learning, nor wisdom, nor even piety, can secure exemption. Some are sullen in their trials, and cherish secretly a spirit of deep resentment to the instruments of their troubles. Some are fretful, discontented, and fill the air with bitter murmurings and loud repinings. Some sink into despondency, and overwhelmed by fearful bodings of darker days and deeper trials, rush out of life, and quench the only hope of bliss to come.

The Christian exercises patience, endures with equanimity of spirit, nor dares to charge with want of wisdom, love, or faithfulness, the providence of God.

And patience is the sweetener of our ills, the lightener of our burdens, and the assuager of our griefs. For fretfulness defeats itself, and our repining for some absent good only increases present pain and evil.

Patience looks with eye serene, through second causes up to God.

It clearly recognizes the government of heaven as superintending all, directing and controlling things most intricate, and out of seeming evil deducing real good. It knows that in his hands, whom seraphim and cherubim adore, all must be righteous, pure, and good.

Patience listeneth to the promises and gracious declarations of the oracles of truth. And can one word of promise fail? Will God forget? or lose his power, or willingness to save those who have trusted in his love? Rather will heaven itself for ever pass away, than one engagement of his mouth shall not be to the very utmost verified.

Patience reads the records of the good and pious, and seeketh in their heaven-bound steps to walk.

She witnesseth the son of Jacob's fondest wishes, his cherished, and perhaps unwisely distinguished Joseph, falsely accused, and to a dungeon doomed; yet waiting patiently till God should bring him forth reproachless, and open for him paths of honour and utility.

Moses with wondrous meekness, and with elastic patience, suffered long from those whom he had led from Egypt's slavery; and when the wrath of heaven darkened the horizon above them, pleaded, if no other terms would suspend the threatened storm, that his own name might be blotted from the book of life.

But Job stands forth in holy writ, as the striking personification of this grace.

How sore his trials, how complicated, how like evil messengers treading on each other's heels. How over-

whelming, wave followed wave in quick succession, until at length his cattle, corn, his buildings, children, all were swept away before his gaze.

Then to the list of sorrows, his own body filled with painful loathsome maladies. And added to the whole, the deep suspicion and cruel inuendoes of his friends. How was his day of brightness into night and darkness turned!

How deep, and comprehensive, and acute his sufferings were. And yet a pupil in the school of patience he was heard to say, Shall good be only given at our Father's hands, and not evil! The Lord doth give, and also takes away, for ever blessed be his sacred name.

And patience in his sad experience had its perfect work, and how it shone when every cloud had fled, and how it triumphed over dark surmisings, and how it rolled back the waters of the sea of trouble, and how it brightened forth like gold refined, and how it justified the ways of God to man, and how it gave the illustrious sufferer blessings in rich abundance over all he formerly enjoyed.

And shall we silent be, concerning him, who shone with every grace, and in whom piety was perfected, yet malignant hatred, and griefs unparalleled, like stormy billows, overwhelmed his soul, and yet who like the gentle lamb was to the slaughter led, or like the sheep before her shearers dumb, he opened not his mouth.

And how the history of the apostles and early followers of Jesus, is full of testimonies to the patient spirit which bore them up, amid all kinds of torture, that devils could invent, or men apply.

Of such indeed unworthy was the world; and the patience of the saints mid scenes of blood and suffering, is recounted by the sainted spirits round the throne in heaven.

Then Christian, cultivate this queen of graces, let her preside and rule, and peace and equanimity will reign within thy soul.

She will give the indomitable spirit of noble perseverance in the right, despite the foes or dangers that surround thee.

She will toil mid difficulties that appear to human reason insurmountable.

She will, in the hour of fearful terror and disquietude, be still and hear what God shall speak.

She will wait his time and way, nor dare to meddle with the things which God doth order.

She, believing, never will repair to sinful schemes, and making haste, defeat the purposes of heaven. But mid the flood of deep and many waters, will like Noah's dove, the olive branch of peace present, and say,—Wait with submission, for the time of thy deliverance draweth near.

And Christian, say, when looking through the vista of the future, and viewing all the radiant glories of the skies, the weight of bliss which as a crown will grace and bless thy head through unmeasured ages; is it too much to bear with patience, the shadowy sorrows, and the passing sufferings of thy momentary being here below?

THE PEACEMAKER.

How sweetly doth the sound of peace vibrate on the ear. How horrid is the cruel din and clash of war. How painful too the strife of tongues. How mournful is the scene where men give way to bickering, contentions, envy, hatred, and devilish animosities, where man appears the inveterate enemy of man. How oft too is this spirit fanned to flame, by men possessed of passions of like tendency.

How beautiful in contrast stands forth the peacemaker! whose hallowed influence is piously exerted to allay and soothe, and concord to promote. Who, like the dove, hovers around, bearing the symbol of harmony and love.

Whose countenance is lit with rays of true benignity; who is full of holy tenderness, and whose charities encircle all mankind. Clad in the vestments of his sacred Lord, anointed with the Spirit from above, armed with the bloodless weapons of the truth, influenced by love to God and love to man, he wends his way to execute his mission far and near. Finds he men striving; he will say, strive not, for you are brethren. Perceives he that the apple of discord has been thrown into the social circle; he says, as bound in kindred bonds, fall not out by the way. If nations threaten nations with the attack of arms and invading armies, he urges arbitration, and recommends that wisdom, calm, deliberate, and not brutal force should settle all their differences.

Where'er he goes, his spirit doth proclaim, I am for

peace; and those who watch his steps cry out with admiration, Blessed are the men of peace, for they God's children are, in verity and truth!

Then reader seek, that in thy bosom the spirit of amity and peace may dwell. Seek that the lovely and gentle mind of Christ may dwell in thee. Seek too, that thou mayest ever live in peace with God, and be environed by that peace that passeth understanding. And seek in all thy intercourse with man, by word and deed, to show the blest propriety and excellency of peace. Nor let thy spirit towards those who do not see with thee on subjects of religion or benevolence, be disturbed.

Even on the subject of peace itself, men—for want of thought, or through an education unpropitious, or through the influence of calling, or that perpetual moving thing, self-love—may not in clearness understand the vast importance of the theme. Well, bear and forbear; let light in sweet and gentle rays descend, and raise them to an altitude where truth and peace will be perceived in all their real excellencies.

A peacemaker must not become a dogmatist, but gently use persuasive arts. Yet peace so heavenly and good, and precious, must not be gained by compromise of holy principle. There is a peace unhallowed, where truth and righteousness are sacrificed to obtain it. From such a peace turn with abhorrence. It descendeth not from him who sendeth every good and perfect gift; but it is the spawn of hell, the base resemblance only of the real, the money counterfeit, which is not current with the good on earth, or with the blest in heaven.

Peace must not be severed from the truth, but hand

in hand must travel, bearing down error and iniquity, and thus erecting on the stable basis of righteousness, a kingdom pure and lovely, resembling that exalted realm, where justice and righteousness uphold the throne, around which the bow of peace in loveliest hues appears.

The peacemaker is blest with rich enjoyments while he lives, with calm serenity he shall present his charge to God, and mingle with the kindred peaceful hosts of heavenly joy for evermore.

THE DIVINE PROMISES.

The divine promises form a very extensive part of the sacred volume, and in these, in a most especial manner, are the riches of the goodness and grace of God displayed.

It is the privilege of man to peruse this heavenly inventory of blessings, and to appropriate them in all their fulness to his personal exigencies.

Yet how essential is it that the promises be distinctly understood, and duly contemplated in their express and limited application to certain conditions and characters specifically described.

Neglecting this, the enthusiast may reckon on gifts and communications which were specially bestowed and only designed for special offices and peculiar seasons.

The profane erreth, if he expecteth the good which is promised to the devout; or the unbeliever, if he reck-

oneth on mercies vouchsafed to faith; or the carnal, if he looketh for blessings which are promised to the earnest and spiritually-minded; or the obdurate, if he supposeth he shall enjoy the solace of the penitent; or the negligent, if he anticipateth the fruitfulness only warranted to the diligent and faithful servant.

'Tis true some promises are general, and belong to the whole species. Of such may be reckoned the engagement of infinite compassion, to send the woman's seed to bruise the serpent's head.

Of such too, that the care and goodness of the providence of heaven shall give the revolving seasons and the gathering harvest to the family of man.

Of such also, that the word of truth and light shall visit every land, and clime, and tongue, and that the gospel shall be preached to every creature.

But promises of heaven's perpetual guardian care, belong to those who fear the Lord.

Angelic ministration is engaged for such as are salvation's heirs; and all the holy gifts of spiritual influences and heavenly glories, are given only unto those who by faith are children of the living God.

And therefore carefully examine the tenure on which the blessings are suspended, and always bear in mind, that character and promise are inviolably linked together.

And often too the promise is allied to the discharge of duty to which God calls his people,—not connected by the warranty of merit, for sinners saved by grace can have no merit, but rather by a holy fitness in the recipient for the boon bestowed.

To faithful, instant, persevering prayer the key of heaven's treasure is presented, and the holy fervent suppliant is permitted to enter and enrich himself with all his ardent soul desires.

To deep humility, celestial dignity and exaltation are insured.

To him who loveth mercy, mercy shall surely be imparted.

To those who ply with diligence their religious holy calling, abundant riches shall be given.

To those of liberal soul, whose generosity dispenseth far and near, a hale and vigorous state of mind, and invincible establishment in grace.

To those whose lot it is to be maligned for the gospel's sake, or loss to suffer, a present inward recompense of purest joy, and in the world to come, an exceeding great reward.

To all those who by patient perseverance in paths of well-doing, glory, immortality, and eternal life.

Now these are but a sample from the boundless store of love divine; but how they clearly show, that character and promise go together.

Hence promises are given to those assailed by the fiery darts of hell.

To those who heavy-laden are with many griefs and sorrows.

To those who, in God's providence, are called to pass through troublous waters, or afflictive fires.

To those bereaved of kindred and dear friends.

To the pious poor, the orphan, the widow, and the fatherless.

To those surrounded with the infirmities of age, and who tottering walk along the margin of the tomb.

To those whose heart and flesh do fail, and who perform the solemn journey through death's dark and awful valley.

O Christian, how exalted art thou in the rich and precious promises of heaven!

How they glitter over thine adoring head in the celestial firmament! How varied, how full, how free, how sure, how everlasting!

Make them all thine own by prayer and faith's appropriation.

Enjoy them here as thy spiritual birthright; anticipate by lively hope those which refer to the eternal glories of the future world, and celebrate by loudest praise the grace and love from which they emanate.

THE INTERCESSOR.

In ancient times the visitor to the tabernacle erected in the wilderness, or the temple of Solomon, would have beheld in splendid vestments the priest of God interceding for the people. That economy, with its sacrifices, and rites, and priesthood, has passed away. The priesthood of Aaron has been succeeded by that of him who is a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec. Now, the priesthood is concentrated in the person of one, even Jesus the Son of the Most High God.

This office was conferred on him by the Father; he was anointed to it by the plenitude of the Holy Spirit, at his baptism; and he presented the needful sacrifice of his own self, on the altar of the cross of Calvary.

Having offered the mystical and infinitely efficacious oblation, he entered into the holiest place of all, even the heaven of heavens; and there he appears in the presence of God for his people.

He is there to dispense the blessings of his grace to mankind; but he is there also, to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

We dare not say that his intercession does not benefit the world—prolong the probationary state of the sinner—and keep suspended the sword of wrath over the head of the obdurate.

But the Intercessor is chiefly engaged in advocating the interests of those who come unto God by him.

How striking and delightful is the character of the Saviour in the exercise of this gracious office!

How unsullied his nature! How dignified his station! How intensely affectionate his sympathies!

He appeals to the immaculateness of his person, to the perfection of his obedience, to the complete execution of the work the Father gave him to do.

He appeals to his agony, his bloody sweat, his passion, and his ignominious death upon the tree.

He appeals to the sovereign virtue of his atoning blood, to his resurrection, the acceptation of his sacrifice, and his regal authority and glory in the heavenly state.

What an Intercessor! What majesty, and goodness, and graciousness centre in him!

To him our persons must be brought, for all the saved are saved in him.

In him our faith and trust must alone be placed, for he is the only basis of the sinner's hope.

Through him all our prayers and praises, our worship, our penitence, our gratitude, our deeds of charity and mercy must pass, to receive the smile and favour of our God.

To him all our concerns must be committed, and into his hand must be believingly surrendered all our high and momentous interests, pertaining to eternity.

And at last when life shall end, resting on his mediation, and yielding our spirit into his care, we must pass with holy rapture from this world of sorrow to the realms of endless day and blessedness.

Forget not his intercession is that of purest infinite compassion; that it is instant, unceasing, and ever, ever must prevail.

Then love him, and adore; trust him with all thou hast; and expect, through his merits, glory, immortality, and endless life.

ON FORGIVING INJURIES.

The forgiveness of others is one of the essential prerequisites to the attainment of divine forgiveness. He who forgiveth not the trespasses of men against himself shall never be forgiven.

And yet how difficult to yield this law ready, cheerful, and hearty obedience.

How human nature would prefer to cherish keen resentments, and what is called, the sweetness of revenge.

Sweet it may be, to men of fiery passions, to men whose hearts have never felt the influence of heavenly love, whose carnal nature is bowed down by the dire manacles of hellish domination.

Sweet it may be, also to little puerile minds, whose souls are destitute of true nobility, and who are strangers to the warm emotions of love and generosity.

Sweet it may be, to men whose pride and haughtiness inflate with arrogant assumptions, and who rage with fury if subjected to injury from others.

Sweet, did I say? But is it not the sweetness of sugared poison which will spread a moral death throughout the soul?

Sweet to the depraved excited taste it may be, but in its influence, no gall or wormwood can more bitter be.

The man who forswears forgiveness to his fellows should be perfect, and have no spot upon his own fair character, or unto him some exercise of clemency hath been extended.

And where 's the perfect man who never did offend his

brother man, and did not afterwards rejoice in the forgiveness that swept away the remembrance of his faults?

Then surely such, should ne'er allow the bitterness of unrelenting malevolence to prey upon his mind.

If thou wouldest know in truth and verity the sweetest luxury that can arise from thine own actions, let clemency, compassion, and true pity, richly supply thee with their streams of kind forgiveness.

To forgive with heartiness, and banish every lingering cloud of dark resentment from the mind, is the highest effort and noblest exercise to which thou canst be called.

In this, thou imitatest him whose goodness fills the earth, and whose tender mercies are richly spread through all his works.

In this, thou hast communion with the Prince of Peace whose dying breath implored forgiveness for his cruel murderers.

In this, thou dost exemplify the spirit of the gospel, and provest that forgiving grace has not been given to thee in vain.

In this, thou disappointest Satan of his prey; and his power dissolves, for he hates the genial clime of mercy and benignity as he hates God and holy things.

In this, thou mayest, with bended knee, and suppliant voice, and holy fervour, pray,—Lord, as I mine enemies forgive, forgive thou me,—and rest assured, that mercy shown to others shall return again to thee with numerous blessings in its train.

And though the offender may have multiplied his sins against thee, yet let thy graciousness of soul, like the overflowing tide, into oblivion's depths, bear all away.

FRIENDSHIP.

Friendship is the affectionate union of minds in the bonds of kindliness and benevolence.

That, only deserves the name of friendship which is based on moral principle, and is sustained by sincerity and goodness.

It would seem, that in order to real friendship, there should be close intimacy, congeniality of spirit, and kindredness of affection.

There are minds greatly deficient in the true elements of cohesion, and there are others where selfishness so predominates, as to form an insuperable barrier to genuine friendship.

There is much more of the profession of friendship in the world than of the reality, and many who bear the name, migrate as the seasons alter, to warmer and more sunny climes.

Man is eminently formed and evidently designed for receiving and reciprocating a friendly spirit; and it is evident that much of our happiness in this life is interwoven with it.

Ingenuousness, courtesy, goodness, and sympathy, are its essential elements, and constancy one of its most lovely attributes: for "a friend loveth at all times."

Fidelity and candour are indispensable to its health and vigour; and flattery and dissimulation its bane and ruin.

Friendship is often most strikingly exhibited in little things, and those who are indifferent to these, seldom are

blest with friendship worth having, or retain that which is worth enjoying.

Forget not those who have been the steady friends of thy predecessors, "thine own and thy father's friend forsake not."

The rich often appear to have many friends, but those that Mammon gathereth, one stroke of adversity will scatter; hence the patriarch Job exclaimed, "All my friends abhorred me, and they whom I loved are turned against me."

If thou hast been so favoured as to have one real friend, be thankful; esteem and reciprocate his affection. "For a man that hath friends must show himself friendly."

Envy hath often corroded it, suspicion blighted it, and anger consumed it.

Kindness is the atmosphere where this plant of loveliness can vegetate and bloom, and the frosts of uncharitableness inevitably destroy it.

The scriptures present many delightful instances of friendship in its highest and most dignified exhibitions: how beautifully was it evinced in the history of Ruth and Naomi; as the Moabitish widow exclaimed, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

How nobly it existed between David and Jonathan; observe the sympathetical dirge of the sweet singer of

Israel, "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan! thou wast slain in thine high places; I am distressed for thee my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me, thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished."

How kind and courageous the friendship of Onesiphorus for the inspired apostle of the Gentiles, and which he has thus engraven on the page of revelation, "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain. But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently and found me . . . And in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus thou knowest very well."

But friendship in its grandest and most sublime manifestation was presented in the life and mission of him, who though "he was rich yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich."

Whether we contemplate the character and station of the Redeemer, or the unworthiness of the objects of his regard, or the price he paid to effect their well being, this is the climax of all that is great, and generous, and glowing in friendship; and throughout time and eternity will have no parallel nor fit resemblance.

A feeble imitation of it is seen in the good will of his people towards one another, and in their love and mercy toward their perishing fellow-men.

Friendship, counsels with wisdom and kindness, sympathizes with tenderness, and assists with cheerfulness.

Friendship, abideth mid misfortunes, endureth the

assaults of malevolence, gives countenance amidst reproaches, consoles in adversity, visits in affliction, lives beyond death, and flourishes in eternity.

Hence it pines not with the wastings of disease, expires not with the stroke of mortality, and decays not in the grave of putrescence.

Friendships formed on godly principles on earth, become evergreens, and thrive with celestial bloom in the goodly land that is afar off.

Be not hasty in admitting assuming friends into the chambers of thine heart, or making them the objects of thy trust; but whilst candidly and charitably hoping the best, yet forget not that thy fellow-man is often a broken reed; and the wise man saith, that "confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble, is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint." Conduct thyself towards thy friends that they cannot hate thee, nor yet despise thee, and if possible that they must honour and love thee.

Be not easily offended, and guard against giving just ground of complaint, and frankly admit when wrong hath overtaken thee. Sanctify thy friendship by fervent prayer, and seek its consummation in the regions of immortality.

Let no bribe tempt thee to forsake thy friend, nor by any act compel him to abandon thee.

Suspect not in thine heart, nor whisper evil even in secret, but let openness and sincerity adorn thee.

Especially seek the friendship of Jehovah, and the consolations of religion; for whatever earthly friendships are incompatible with these, are not worth thy having, and their influence must be for evil and not for good.

If friends should fail, and thy spirit should grieve within thee, forget not that David's friends conspired against him; that Job's friends forsook him in the hour of need; and that the professed friend of the world's Redeemer sold him for thirty pieces of silver.

ON MARRIAGE.

God having planted the social principle in the nature of the first man, provided him with an help meet for him; one who should be his companion, his solace, and closest friend. One emphatically a part of himself, and endowed with all the tenderest sympathies of his own nature, even in a pre-eminent degree.

The marriage relationship therefore, is the most intimate that can be formed, and when based on appropriateness of mental and moral choice, and hallowed by fervent affection, is of all others the most conducive to human comfort and enjoyment.

It is a union however that requires wisdom and prudence rightly to form; and much kind care and discretion to maintain, in all its close and sacred associations unimpaired.

How few seem to be acquainted with its true merits, and importance. One is enamoured with a beautiful face or handsome form, and is utterly indifferent as to the mental or moral qualifications possessed.

Some merely seek a dowry, and are much more in heart wedded to the purse than the person.

And some enter upon it lightly and unadvisedly, as if it were a contract that could be dissolved at will, or broken at pleasure.

A wise man will pay some attention to the stock and parentage, both on physiological and moral grounds. He will not be indifferent to the mental training, and the social atmosphere in which the object of his choice has been educated.

Not indifferent to personal attractions, he will have especial respect to the characteristics of the mind, and to the qualities of the heart.

If peace and joy are to result from the marriage compact, there must be mutual agreeableness of person, genial harmony of sentiment, and oneness of pursuit.

Two cannot walk together except they be agreed, and therefore a close and happy union can only be expected to arise from a physical, intellectual, and moral harmony.

There are some things which phrenology describes as most desirable. The principle of adhesiveness which is the cement of the bond, a goodly measure of concentrated affection, an evident manifestation of benevolence, which is the crowning glory of mankind.

It is not safe to be allied with those of wavering, unsettled minds, with those of suspicious tendency, or with close reserve and cherished secretiveness, or with a disposition to irritation and anger, and much less to envy, jealousy, and wrath.

Yet imagine not that any earthly being should possess in full perfection, all thou wouldest desire; and for-

get not, that with thy own frailties some kind forbearance must be exercised.

How truly grievous is it, that in a matter of so much importance to human weal and happiness, that through thoughtlessness and ill-matched alliances, many should be wedded only to strife and bickerings; and that the stream of human trouble which is the lot of all, should be made more dark and turbid by the bitter ingredients of ill-assorted marriages.

This never can be a concern of small import, or of minor moment; it is a life-lease of increased good, that nothing else can give; or of protracted grief and sorrow, that the opening grave alone absorbs.

Be wise then in this high concern; enter on its path with care and prudence, and seek that heavenly wisdom may direct thy steps, and give to thee the richest earthly treasure, a wise, affectionate, and virtuous wife.

And woman, let not thy kind and unsuspecting nature supplant that wise and prudent forethought which thou shouldest with circumspection exercise most rigidly, when thou art moved to enter the marriage circle.

To thee this step, next to the favour of thy God, is all in all.

From henceforth, not thine own, but his, whose dominion will be kind and congenial to thy gentle nature, or rude, and violent, and destructive of all thy peace and joy.

Let no foolish thoughts invade thy mind, that 'tis not honourable to live and die unwedded, and make thee anxious the first presented bait to seize. It were better beyond all compare, if thou hadst many generations here

on earth to live, to be consigned to deepest solitude, than dwell with one unfitted for the close endearing kindness that happy marriages involve.

The wisest, noblest, best, and happiest of thy sex, have been those women who would not throw their peace and hopes away, where confidence could not be fully placed, or warm affection yielded, with the certainty of a full reciprocated return.

Seek counsel then before this step for life is taken, and let not prudence throw the reins aside, lest fancy, passion, or misplaced affection should consign thee to a maze of doubt, and wretchedness, and sorrow.

If providence doth open clear before thee the path of matrimony, and sends thee one in whom Christian principles, and manly generosity, with sterling sense and unquestionable affection dwell, who seeks thy hand, then yield it, and pray God's blessing on it, and prove thyself a wife indeed deserving of his fullest confidence and love, and peace be ever with thee!

PARENTS.

The parental relationship is one of close endearment, and of momentous responsibility.

The emotions with which it is identified, are the most tender and lively of which the human bosom is susceptible.

The love of offspring, and paternal delight in them, are among the deepest and most intense of all the affections.

The wild untutored savage needs no one to insist that he should love his child. With unsubdued ferocity, and treachery and murder in his soul towards his enemies, yet with gentleness and overweening fondness does he protect and give his offspring needful good.

And yet, with all this kindness, is it not a fearful truth that few, even of Christian name, discharge parental duties with the wisdom and the kind of love which true religion claimeth.

To seek them needful food and raiment, to shelter them from storm, to protect from ills and perils by which they are environed; all this is well, but only natural; this but feebly imitateth some of those creatures deemed inferior to our race.

What strong attachment doth the harpooned whale display towards her young, or the hunted furious bear; and with what interest does the sheep behold her bleating lamb.

But human offspring have a high and intellectual nature; mind designed for mental action, and for continuous improvement.

They have the powers of reasoning—perception, and reflection. They have passions of a noble order, and they too, with ourselves, possess a conscience which speaks within of their accountability to God and man.

To feed the body and neglect the mind, is only kindness such as brutes display, and evinceth that such parents have no minds to know, or hearts to appreciate, the precious and ethereal parts of human nature.

The mind must have its daily meal of mental food.

Its nourishment and culture should occupy all the solicitude that parents' hearts can feel.

Neglect the mind, and thy child will grow in strength corporeal, but his soul will remain stunted, puerile, or extremely vicious, by drinking in, the poisonous streams around it.

Neglect the mind, and you inflict a fearful curse by letting that lie dormant which would have been the glory of thy child.

Such children, unless fostered by some other genial care, will be burdens on the state—moral lepers in the spheres in which they move—the subjects of enjoyments merely brutal — and, in many cases, the shame and scourge of those who gave them being.

Proud and perverse, impelled by passions of their lowest nature, to tender feelings strangers, without a noble aim or end in life, will it be marvellous if they should mingle with the vicious—become the inmates of the prison—exiled to penal settlements—or end, in direst ignominy, their lives upon the gallows?

Parents, your station is one most onerous. Begin be-

times to form, and lead, and mould the mind. When young the powers and faculties are plastic and easily receive the impress you intend. The tender osier may be bent or reared as the owner listeth.

Infuse into their minds sound knowledge, and train them up in close acquaintance with the principles of truest excellency.

The bible be your book of training—your daily monitor, and teach its truths with diligence by morning light, and evening shades, when thou dost walk with them abroad, or when thou dost retire.

Early impress their own responsibility, instil into them the principles of due respect to men, reverence and love for God, and holy emulation of the good they see in others.

Warn against evil, hold up the vicious, as beacons, that they may avoid the hidden rocks and shoals of sin around them.

Let thy parental counsels have their due authority; clothe with the words of power imperative; yet mingle with the whole the vein of love, that even perverse spirits cannot quite reject, without a feeling sense of guilt and shame.

Foster not sullenness of spirit before them; be not soon angry, nor let the sun go down upon thy wrath.

Let discipline be sound and firm, but let not punishment ever be severe or beyond measure.

Let them know the value of the character thou labourest to produce. Speak of the approbation of the good and wise; address their self-respect; allude especi-

ally to His celestial favour which far outweighs both life, and all terrestrial things.

Set cheerful piety before them day by day. Libel not by gloominess and melancholy—falsely called religious—the sweet and radiant paths of saving wisdom.

Commit them earnestly, in all thy prayer, to him whose power alone can change the human heart, and whose blessing is essential to success.

Reckon that thy children must be accounted for; think of their standing with thee in the presence of thy Judge.

Think of their endless destiny. Think of unending joys in heaven, or remediless despair and anguish in hell beneath; and oh! be anxious that through all eternity thy children may partake with thee of all the glories, bliss, and ecstacy, included in eternal life.

TO CHILDREN.

It seems scarcely possible that this book can be introduced into many families, without some children, those living household treasures, occasionally looking into it.

For their sole use and benefit this chapter is penned, and I trust it may be found applicable to many a case between the ages of six and fourteen.

And now, my dear youthful reader, the writer of this book remembers well his years of childhood.

He remembers the affectionate attentions and unceasing care of parents, relatives and friends.

He remembers his first school-mistress, and how she stooped to his childish capacity to make him acquainted with the first lessons of his education.

He remembers the loss of his best and nearest friend, a pious, affectionate mother.

He remembers how many scenes of pain and sorrow followed that, to him, a loss no earthly power could supply.

He remembers being sent from home to a distant school, and many of the foolish and naughty things he did at that early period of his life.

He remembers too when his days of schooling ended with what fond hopes and bright expectations he entered on active life; in youth united with God's people—became a man—and then a minister—and afterwards a writer of many books—and many of them for the instruction and entertainment, and improvement of the young.

Having such distinct recollections of the past history of himself, he thinks he can offer some remarks that may benefit his youthful readers, perhaps through life.

And first, he would remind them that life must have some end to answer, and that both God and men have a right to expect certain things to be accomplished by the rising generation.

To know yourselves is of very great importance.

To remember your ignorance in respect to most things around you.

That people who are older must have seen a great deal more, and understand therefore vastly better than it would be reasonable to expect from you.

Then do not think too highly of yourselves, but cultivate modesty and lowliness of mind.

And remember that you must be very attentive to what you see and hear, so that you may grow daily in wisdom, that is, in the right using of what you know.

Keep your eyes and ears open, and knowledge will and must get into your minds; and do not care so much about the use of your tongue, until you can say what is worth hearing, and what those around must approve.

It is very degrading to be often told to be silent, and the right management of your tongue will be of the greatest service to you.

I do not wish you to be sullen, but converse freely and cheerfully, but let it be at the right time, and in proper measure.

What you desire to know that your books do not instruct you in, ask of your parents, or your elder brothers and sisters, or of your teacher, or some kind friend.

Give due respect and reverence to your parents, do not take advantage because they love you, but value their love, and see to it, that your conduct will cause it to increase.

Obey promptly their commands ; do not question what they wish, but *do it*, and always with a smiling face, and cheerful heart.

Never speak or act when they are absent contrary to their wishes, for if you enter on the path of deceit, it will lead you into grievous sins, and many sorrows.

If you should do wrong, confess it, and seek their forgiveness, and watch more earnestly in future.

Be ingenuous in all you say and do. Especially regard the truth, and never, no never utter what is false.

A lying tongue is the hatred of God, and the utter abhorrence of all good men.

Waste not your time. I would not hinder daily play or recreation, but try every day to learn what was unknown to you before, and labour every day to do something that is worth doing, and will bear remembrance.

Be kind and gentle to your brothers, and more especially to sisters ; their confidence and love is well worth having.

Let not pride nor envy make you indifferent to them, or be grieved because they have, what you have not.

With goodness and generosity treat all your youthful companions and friends.

Be liberal in giving what you may possess, and remember what there is left behind will thus be sweeter.

Forgive those who may offend you, and let not anger rest and lodge within you.

Be considerate and compassionate to the poor, never mock the lame, or insult old age, but cherish pity towards all who are unfortunate and less happy than yourselves.

Avoid bad company; be not enticed to acts of mischief.

Rude and profane society flee from, as you would a house infected with the plague.

Do not gamble even for smallest sums, and let your acts of play be free from malice or ill temper.

And above all, often think that God beholds you—that his eyes are ever over and around you.

Fear God, and remember sin against him must be earnestly repented of and forsaken, or it will lead you down to darkest regions of everlasting death and sorrow.

Pray to God that he may be your guide, and save you from the numerous snares of youthful life.

Seek the Lord that he may bless you with his favour, and give you a heart to know and serve him constantly.

Rejoice that Jesus came to seek and save poor ruined sinners, and that he stretches out his arms to gather you as a good Shepherd, into his bosom, and if you come to him, and trust to his redeeming grace, he will to your souls be more precious than all the world could give.

Forget not constantly to seek from God the blessings that you need, and praise him daily for all the bounties he has given you.

Neglect not public worship, but go and learn true wisdom from the lips of the messengers of salvation, and daily read some portion of God's holy word. And dear children, early dedicate yourselves to God.

Choose the godly for your chiefest friends, and resolve

with all your hearts and souls to seek the way that leads to everlasting life.

Seek God's blessing on all you do, and pray that he may make you good, and wise, and happy; that he may make you the joy of your parents and friends—holy members of his church on earth, and blessings to the world in which you live.

And forget not, you may die before the days of childhood are flown over. How many graves just large enough for you are found in every burial-ground.

I would not make you gloomy, but do remember that you must surely die—enter eternity—and appear before the Judge of all mankind.

Only the pure in heart will then be happy, or have a joyful entrance into heaven.

The blood of Jesus makes all pure and holy who do believe in it, and follow in his sacred heavenly footsteps.

And if you should not die in youth, but live till fourscore years, religion will adorn and bless you, and also make you a real good to all around you.

Then, like John who leaned on the bosom of the Saviour, be young disciples of the blessed Jesus, and love, and serve, and praise him all your days.

ON TEACHING.

Teaching pertaineth to a high and noble office, and yet numerous are the persons and various the grades of those who are called to engage in it.

The highest is that of the messenger of heaven, who beareth with him the tidings of the celestial amnesty, and whose labour of mercy and compassion, is to persuade the thoughtless sons of men at enmity with God, to receive his favour in the spirit of reconciliation.

Next to him is that of the pedagogue, whose office it is to instruct a nation's youth, and train a race for works of usefulness and dignity for the ensuing generation.

No easy task devolves on such an one, and great is the responsibility inseparably identified with such an undertaking.

His materials, how varied and dissimilar! The pampered child of luxury—the mother's enervated darling—the wayward, ill-behaved—the mischief-maker—the hero of riot and confusion—the lazy dolt who dreads his book as if its pages were o'er-run with spectres—the naturally dull and heavy of understanding, who never seemingly was designed for ought but toil, the window of whose mind, almost opaque, refuses light admission.

To know each disposition, to be well acquainted with the evidences of genius, and peculiar fitness for some path adapted to their mental calibre; to study, too, the means by which their future lot in life is to be decided, is the vast and comprehensive office of the teacher.

Then, to suit the mode of teaching to the scholar's own

capacity and aptitude, and the wondrous charm of making lessons easy, and throwing o'er them the spell of fascination:—

To elevate the mental character, and with that process, gently the manners to correct, and mould by sweet instruction and good example, the moral powers of the soul:—

To store the mind with light and truth, and train it up in intellectual paths to roam, and then to give the whole a sound and moral action.

Not to teach names alone, but things—not merely words, but trains of thought—not merely lessons philological, but philosophical—causes and effects—and withal, the principles of sciences and arts.

Not to store the memory so much with ancient lores of tongues now obsolete, as with the signs, distinctions, illustrations, and uses, of soundest knowledge and wisdom practical.

Who knows but he who has the process tried, how difficult it is to reach a consummation so important and desirable?

What skill—what tact—what precision—what diligence—what knowledge of our nature—what right directed influence—what patience—and what an exemplification of what is taught, should the teacher's life exhibit!

The power of example added to wisely given instruction, seldom fails to gain the end desired.

And if a teacher should in his own person and in his art combine so many excellencies, then how necessary that parents and guardians of youth should know and well approve the character and fitness of those, to whom they give the arduous task of teaching.

How possible that mind may be marred for want of skill in moulding it; that genius may be blighted for want of wisdom to elicit it, and when elicited, to wisely foster and improve its growth.

Besides, how principles and rules of action may be formed, and habits dire and awful in their influence, if moral principle be wanting in the teacher!

There is another class of teachers, humble in the estimation of men who only value mental training; I mean the sabbath-school instructor,—

Whose office is an honorary one; whose only motive is the good of poor neglected children; whose most essential qualification is Christian principle in lively exercise, with a moderate share of knowledge, and sterling common sense.

Who has to stoop to ignorance in its lowest forms, and dig the ore from minds neglected by the world around.

His early morning meal, hastily despatched, he quickly moves with cheerful steps to the associated school-room of the poor.

With prayer for heaven's sweet smile, and rich essential blessing; with care, and patience, and affection, he leads his scholars through instruction's path of difficult ascent.

But his, is chiefly to nurture and with the scrap of knowledge furnished, to dilate on truths which revelation doth exhibit:—to speak of God and things divine—of man—his nature—fall—his ruin—helplessness and misery—of Jesus Christ, the way of life eternal—of gospel duties, privileges, and blessings—to inculcate obedience to parents and teachers, love to all and holy fear of God.

By pleasing stories and simple illustrations to bring down things of sublimest kind to suit their narrowed weak capacities—to do this lovingly, so that the teacher is lost in the friend and benefactor; and that the child hastens with delight to join his class, and listen to the words of gentle wisdom.

How many thousands of the rising generation of the poor will have to bless the day that sabbath schools were formed in our land!

How many families have received back a docile child, well behaved and mentally and morally improved, who left their dwelling at the first, rude, ignorant, and disobedient!

How many churches have, from these instructive nurseries, increased the number of their active members, who in return have laboured much to bless the sphere in which they move!

Of ministers and missionaries, not a few have first received the seeds of learning, and the better seeds of holy knowledge in the sabbath school.

To teachers in these seminaries of Christian truth and principle we say,—seek heavenly knowledge for yourselves—be prompt—be diligent—be punctual—be serious, yet with cheerful gravity—be kind, and exercise long-suffering to your charge—be prayerful, that those committed to your care may grow in knowledge and in favour both with God and man.

Be exact, and let no word escape or action be observed which can impair your influence.

Be faithful to the end, and then hopefully anticipate the day when you and all your children may appear with joy before God's face in heaven.

ON IMITATION.

Phrenologists have allotted certain portions of the head as the sites of the organs of imitation.

Not entering into the philosophy of that science, we wish to treat the matter as one of the manifest exhibitions of mankind, under all the possible varieties and conditions in which men are placed.

All children so soon as they begin to act exhibit it, but some in a much greater degree than others. It is the leading trait in the manners and actions of some persons, and to such it becomes a matter of considerable moment, in the influence it will exert on the faculties of the mind or the destinies of the life.

Imitation of itself is a good, a power invested in us for useful ends, for by it all kinds of learning must be greatly facilitated. But is it not manifest that it is a power capable of fearful abuse, not only in influencing men to copy that which is evil, but where it may become an incubus on the free cultivation of the mind.

It is also painfully borne out by numerous examples, that the foolish and eccentric, and often the evil are imitated, rather than the wise, the sober, and the good.

How many who might have been respectable originals, have been very poor and inefficient imitators of others.

Imitation then is a real good when wisely directed, and duly restrained, and when it invariably followeth after that which is good.

It is also well for men to place before them objects worthy of their emulation, especially in matters where they are personally deficient.

Let the careless imitate the orderly; the undecided, men of promptitude; the indolent, men of activity and diligence; the slow, men of quickness and despatch; and all, the real good they behold in those around them.

Be ye followers of that which is good, the infallible word of truth inculcates, and it also presents a variety of characters worthy of our devout and earnest imitation.

Imitate the piety and sincerity of Abel, the first martyr; the uniform devotion and holiness of Enoch; the believing and practical obedience of Noah; the mighty unwavering faith of Abraham; the unwearying earnestness, and prevailing importunity of Jacob; the conscientiousness of Joseph; the heroic magnanimity and heavenly meekness of Moses; the persevering courage and fidelity of Joshua; the calm and dignified patience and integrity of Job; the spirit of divine communion displayed by David; the consistency and faithfulness of Daniel.

The stern and holy self-denial of the Baptist; the zeal and energy of Peter; the holy love and fervour of John; the wisdom and unwearied assiduity of Paul; in one word, the pious simplicity, and one-hearted liberality of the first disciples of the cross.

But more especially, all the divine and heavenly graces, and perfect virtues, as presented in the life of HIM who hath "left us an example that we should tread in his steps."

In him all excellences are found concentrated. In

him all lines of truth and purity meet. In him all fulness of holiness doth dwell.

Then imitator, as a docile pupil be ever found sitting at his feet, hearing his words, imbibing his spirit; and as the sheep doth gladly follow her own shepherd, so follow him in all the imitable paths of goodness.

Imitate his love to God; his deep continuous devotion; his zeal to glorify his name.

His constant perseverance till all his Father's will he had accomplished.

Imitate his lowliness, his self-denial, his spirit of meekness, gentleness, and infinite compassion to our race.

Imitate his tenderness, his sympathy, his never-ceasing goodness, his ever-flowing bounty, his patience, resignation, and mercy to his vilest enemies.

And if thou wouldest successfully the Saviour copy, then seek his Spirit and the rich supply of grace, that the ability may be given, to do all things he requireth, so that thou mayest be gathered among those, who do follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

ON MUSIC.

Music is the harmony of sounds, the sweet vibrations of melody. It seems to be the joyous buoyancy of nature, and the symphonious utterance of all the works of the eternal.

When God had laid the foundations of our world, and was rearing the stupendous fabric; then the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted aloud for joy.

Milton represents our first parents while clad in the vestments of their original purity, rejoicing in the works of the divine artificer.

"These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair: thyself how wondrous then,
Unspeakable! who sits above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works, yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.
Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in heaven,
On earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end."

The antediluvians combined with the expressions of their vocal praise, instruments, such as the organ and the harp, which were devised and executed by the skilful hand of Jubal and his sons.

One of the earliest effusions of sanctified music was the song of Moses and Miriam, when Pharaoh and his horsemen and chariots "sank like lead in the mighty waters."

Thus too, Deborah the prophetess of the Lord, celebrated in inspired strains, the overthrow of Jabin and Sisera.

David the ruddy son of Jesse, intermingled the varied strains of music with his eventful history. As when the wild and simple pipe expressed his joyous feelings as he followed his flock on the plains of Bethlehem; or when with artistic skill, his harp soothed the angry spirit of Saul. But especially did he excel, when the spirit of inspiration rested on him, and he sang the praises of God in Zion.

How ecstatic his emotions, as he exclaimed, "Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp; I myself will awake early. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people. I will sing unto thee among the nations. For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth."

How exalted was his mind, and seraphic his feelings, when his theme was king Messiah. Hence in his song of loves he breaks forth.

"My heart is inditing a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made, touching the king; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer."

The wise preacher with the fire of inspired and lofty devotion burning on the altar of his heart, composed the song of songs.

Many of the predictions of the ancient seers were given to the church in all the beauty of glowing imagination, and with all the rapture of sanctified song.

The angelic choir hailed in celestial strains the advent of the Messiah; while the plains of Bethlehem resounded with the gracious melody of "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, and good will towards men."

And even the solemnities of the Saviour's eucharistic meal, were followed by the pathetic strains of mournful praise.

In psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, the members of the church at Corinth, with understanding and joyfulness of heart, did edify each other.

And in the gloomy prison at Philippi, the scourged and suffering preachers of the cross sang songs to God amid the midnight hours.

Thus too, the historian noteth of the primitive disciples of the Lord, that early on the first day of the week, they met to speak of him who loved them to the death; to celebrate the mystic meal, and then with songs of joyfulness, to proclaim his praise.

And how has music in her purest strains, been the hallowed handmaid of religion! How, in the rural worship of the patriarch, and the solemn services in the tabernacle of old, and in the temple, 'mid the overwhelming sublime grandeurs, has music given her rich inspiring aid to cheer the worshippers!

And how, in thousands of assemblies, every Christian sabbath, do untold numbers lift their heart and voice in highest strains of pure exalted praise, to celebrate the glories of their God!

And hallowed spiritual songs are heard where'er the Christian missionary unfurls the banner of the cross; and when the knowledge of the Lord shall spread o'er all the earth, then from the rising to the setting sun shall Jesus' name be lifted high in rapturous strains of holy joy and praise.

There is a world where sacred music spreads its charms and pleasures, 'mid countless hosts of seraphim and cherubim, of angels, dominions, thrones, and powers. And apostles, martyrs, and confessors, 'mid myriads of the saints beatified, and where in richest euphony, and with majestic grandeur, even as the sound of many waters, the walls of heaven resound with the burden of that song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;" and when the lofty chorus repeats, "blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb for ever and ever."

How often have the influences of music been perverted! In pandering to the wicked rites of idol worship; in leading on the cruel hosts of earthly warriors; and in cheering for the slaughtering deed, the battle host.

How often has it been enlisted in the cause of silly mirth, and vapid folly, and bacchanalian riot.

How often too, have sensual themes been wafted on its balmy wings!

But let not its perversions make thee out of love with it, for music is the accompaniment of all Jehovah's works and wonders on the earth below, and in the highest heavens.

And if thou dost dislike it, then never lift thine eyes on high, or hearken to the music of the spheres; meditate not on all the starry host, which in splendorous trains bespangle the high vault of heaven,

> "Ever singing, as they shine,
> The hand that made us is Divine."

Then listen not to the sublime roaring of the foamy cataract, or the noisy billows of the sea; for here with true sublimity and with awful sounds doth music lift her voice.

Nor ever hearken to the balmy zephyrs, or to the sweet and meandering streams, as with purling accents, they fall below thy feet.

And take no heed to the feathered choristers of hill and dale, of field and grove, which make the very air a world of gay harmonious joy.

The pleasure music gives, is surely worth thy having, whose tenure here is held on sorrow's lease, and whose accompaniment to the grave is toil and trouble.

Oh yes! it is thy privilege, to have the soul of music in thy spirit, imparted with the gladness of Jehovah's joy and favour, to the child of heaven.

And as thou journeyest onwards towards the better land, beguile the way, improve thy mercies, lighten thy heavy heart by adoring hymns of grateful praise; and thus return to Zion with sacred songs and everlasting joy upon thine head.

And often realize by faith's mysterious power, the joyful day when thou shalt stand before the radiant throne of Christ on high, and celebrate through endless ages, the wonders of his dying love and boundless grace.

BOOKS.

Nearly three thousand years ago, Solomon affirmed, that of making many books there is no end.

If this was a truth when books could only be multiplied by the hand of the scribe, how, if it were not a contradiction, has the endlessness increased by the aid which the printing press supplieth and machinery furnisheth.

We reckon books among the sweetest luxuries of our world, and we would dispense with some of its supposed necessaries, rather than be deprived of them. But books are of many kinds and divers uses. Many have been the media of conveying evil from mind to mind, and thus have been the common sewers of filth and pollution. Many have had their origin in foolishness, and have depended on the children of folly for patronage. Some tend only to frivolity; some to excite and gratify the imagination; some to act as opiates on the conscience; and many as instruments to enable the progeny of indolence to murder time. Some books have the anomalous power of issuing good and evil; fresh water and salt. Some books seem to be of doubtful tendency, and others to have no tendency at all.

Many books have originated in the necessities of the writer—others in the whim of the publisher—and a great number have sprung up to suit the signs of the times.

No man living, could be accurately acquainted with the titles of all the books which are presented to the

public ; much less with their tendency and contents ; and less still, with their style and value.

To be benefited by books, therefore, there must be a wise selection, adapted to our mental exigencies, and suited to our peculiar condition.

Miscellaneous reading may fill the mind with lumber, but will rarely supply the material of mental growth, or intellectual vigour.

In the choice of books, select those most suited to instruct, to edify, and improve. Good books will invariably leave their influence in an improved understanding, a sounder judgment, a better conscience, and a happier heart.

When in a world of books, there is so much really useful, and very much really exalting, and not a little holy and sanctifying ; is it not evident indiscretion to spend the talent of money, and greater talent of time, and still weightier talent of reason, in perusing those which have none of these attributes to recommend them.

While philosophy reasons, and science explains, and history relates events, and biography introduces us to the illustrious and great of every age and nation ; is it not seeming folly to be thirsting for fiction, revelling in the marvellous, or being overwhelmed with the horrible ?

With sacred poetry to elevate, and ethics to improve, and Christian truth to spiritualize ; who would do homage to the novelist, and thus forsake the manna of heaven for the apples of Sodom.

Good books are closet counsellors, family friends, and way-side companions. In these we may have the most

dignified guests, the noblest society, the safest guardians, and the wisest friends.

By books we have intercourse with the dead, and fellowship with the living, and assistance and consolation from both.

Be more anxious for truth than style, for matter than the order, for edification than pleasure; but the books that excel in all, may well have thy first preference and attention.

Judge not of a book by its size, for some pocket volumes contain really and intrinsically more than folios; the question should be the amount and kind of ore, and not the extent of the field that contains it.

Some books should be read with care and many pauses, while others may be traversed with all the speed thy mental powers will bear.

It might be well to ascertain the profit that the book just read has yielded; if much, a re-perusal may be truly wise; if little or peradventure none at all, why then to better cisterns, have recourse.

Good books make known to thine acquaintance, that they may taste the streams which thou hast drank. Beneficence may oft convey her kindly gifts effectually in books. For who can tell the influence a godly volume may exert on many a reader.

But books and reading are themes so full, that he who would treat the subject at length must write a book to teach the way of rightly using other books.

Then just a word or two, if books are worth the reading, they should convey light to the mind, deepen the stores of wisdom in the soul, exert a cheering influence

on the spirit, improve the character, make life more holy, more useful, and more happy, and raise the soul more ardently to seek and long for true enduring knowledge, and higher intellectual treasures in the world above.

READING.

Reading is a power which modern education has conferred on millions ; a power fraught with the elements of mental elevation and enjoyment ; yet like all other talents, it may be neglected, abused, or wisely employed.

The dissipated, the frequenters of the tavern, and the race course, rarely read, except the sporting intelligence of the day.

Others only read that which patronises evil, and disseminates scepticism, profanity, and folly.

How many read to excel in vice, and to be ring-leaders of the more youthful, or less experienced, votaries of sin.

The wise employment of this power is that for which all the friends of morality, truth, and religion should be concerned.

Let thy reading be adapted to thy station in society, the calling in which providence hath placed thee, or the sphere in which thy talents may be most efficiently employed.

Appropriate books, and a course of reading directly adapted to thy mind and situation, are of highest moment.

Unless most of thy time may be directed to this object, select the more leisure seasons, when the mind is free from embarrassing thought, and distracting cares; for these will be invaders that will mar thy pleasures, and rob thee of its best rewards.

If thou canst, let thy reading hours be regular, and guard against intrusions.

If ignorant on the subject which thou resolvest to investigate, then read the simplest elementary books within thy reach.

The first branches are most difficult, and the easier the steps are the better.

If the subject is worthy of the time and labour, then afterwards read the best and most elaborate treatises thereon, and know the whole thou art capable of knowing.

There are books which may safely intervene between more grave and weighty subjects. These, are as a dessert, or as condiments, to more substantial things. But beware that they only rightly season, and fill not up the place of better things.

Read with candour; but let not blind credulity bind thee as a captive to the chariot wheels of any writer.

Enter if thou canst into the end and spirit of the writer, thus thy communion with him will be intimate and joyous.

Read not to carp and show thy quick capacity at finding fault.

Read not to bolster up a character for bearing with thee stores of learned lore; but rather read in quiet modesty, to hive the more than golden treasures.

Read not so much or long, or at distressing seasons, as to injure health, or weaken sight; for that reading must confer a treasure rare, and vast, and biding, that can provide a substitute for these.

Read not so much in other books as to neglect the only one that heaven hath sent, or God hath given, or man received, to show the path of immortality and life.

And next to this, the lives of men of true renown, of holy eminence, and real celebrity.

Of men of intellectual greatness, of sound morality, adorned by Christian virtues, of simple yet sincere devotion—self-denial.

Men of rich benevolence, and active goodness. O yes! read of these until sacred emulation fill thy soul.

Read books pertaining to the works of nature, and government of God.

Read often what will lead thy soul to greater diligence in heavenly things, more fit for blessedness in life, and greater blessedness beyond the grave.

MORAL COURAGE.

Moral courage is the fortitude which enables its possessor to do right in the face of ridicule, and scorn, and opposition.

Many a man has stood unmoved in the midst of fearful physical peril, who has shrunk from the world's laugh with confusion and dismay.

How often have the pointed witticism, the sarcastic sneer, like barbed arrows, poisoned the mind, destroyed its peace, and produced moral agony and wretchedness.

And wherefore arises all this pain and torture, but from an undue and morbid estimation of the opinion of mortals like ourselves.

It were not well totally to despise the estimate which others entertain of us—nay a good name is intrinsically precious; but enslaved indeed is he who suspends his peace and comfort on the breeze of popular opinion.

A reference to God should be the leading principle of the soul: what he may think of us, how we can obtain his pleasure, and secure his favour, and this in purity maintained will lead us to think of human estimate as but, at best, a secondary thing.

For is it not a truth, that his behests are often counter to the course the world approves? Hence no man can his faithful servant be, and crouch and tremble before the opinions and views of men.

The fear of man ensnares and subjects to a tyranny most vile, and odious, and oppressive.

Now moral courage resting on a sure and holy basis, treats with indifference the noisy censure or disesteem of ungodly men. It dares to act alone, and holds its head erect, and soul in high and noble dignity; as Paul, who stood calmly the apostle of his Lord and Saviour in the Areopagus of Athens, surrounded by an audience of learned idolaters.

Moral courage before the judges, in whose hands are placed the destinies of human life, dared to protest against obedience to those laws which contravened the laws of God, and nobly cried, it is better to obey the Lord than men.

It was moral courage that supported Christian martyrs who with placid countenance and soul serene, could calmly see the fiery pile enkindled, which one unholy word of sinful compromise would have quenched.

And this courage is often tested in the young disciple of the cross, who feels that piety will not accord with worldly associates, or wicked company, and who breaks his fellowship with evil doers, and goes to join the scorned and hated servants of the cross.

The main supports of moral courage, are holy fear of God, and faith that receiveth all his word as truth, and rests upon it with unwavering constancy.

A firm persuasion that obedience to his will is right and best in every state and trial; and that good must ever result from constant trusting on him.

That things of sense and time, though near and often terrible in aspect, are but flitting shadows; and that the real and permanent, relate to future and eternal things.

What matters it, if men the scornful finger point, if

God approves and blesses? or if wicked tongues malign, if God his heavenly favour gives, and will confess and own us his, before assembled worlds?

What matters it, if the person be imprisoned, if the mind be free, and breathes the air of holy liberty? or if the limbs be manacled, if the soul walk at large in sunny paths of heavenly delights?

What matters it, if we stand alone the butt of folly's ridicule, and all around contemptuously despise us? The path of wisdom and of holy joy is not affected by the paucity of those who travel in it.

The good in every age have been a small minority, compared with those who travel with the crowd in paths of sin and folly.

Then this be thy concern, to know the truth, to estimate it above all earthly treasure, and however high the price to make the purchase, and hold it fast; approving it by purity of conscience before the Lord, and confessing it with moral heroism before a world that hated unto death the Prince of Truth, and nailed him as a martyr to it, on the ignominious cross.

Be not ashamed then of thy Lord, or of his testimony, or of his people, or of his cause; but hold a good and bold profession fast, until that day when Christ will own and glorify his people before his angels, and the assembled race of man.

ON PUNCTUALITY.

Punctuality or exactness is worthy of the particular regard of all persons, for it concerneth all ranks, classes, and conditions of men.

Punctuality is akin to order; and order has been said to be heaven's first law, at any rate it is distinctly perceptible in all the divine works with which we are conversant.

Want of exactness in the heavenly bodies in accomplishing their evolutions, would distract, if not destroy the harmony and uses of the worlds which are connected with the solar system.

The exactness of the tide is one of the most important principles connected with all that concerns the navigation of the seas.

The exactness of the rising of the sun, influenceth the correctness of time, and preserves an accurate measure of duration.

In all the physical laws with which we are acquainted, exactness or punctuality is one of their leading and essential attributes.

And who can estimate the confusion, disorder, and misery, which arises from want of punctuality among intelligent beings.

Property is often destroyed, enjoyment perverted, and life in innumerable instances sacrificed, for want of punctuality.

Such also give themselves a thousand extra duties,

besides incalculable annoyance, who disregard the law of punctuality.

A letter one instant only too late for the post; or a traveller one minute only behind the setting out of the train, or sailing of the ship, may produce an amount of vexation and disappointment, the which, days of attention cannot remove.

Some are punctual in what they deem great matters, others punctual in nothing, and the few punctual in every thing.

To be punctual only in great things, is to forget that often the weightiest affairs turn upon apparently the smallest causes, and that the lesser wheels in the watch are as necessary to a correct movement as the largest.

Those who are punctual in nothing, should dwell only with each other, and ought not to be allowed to distract the harmony and good feeling of the world by their disregard of regularity.

The punctual not only have a personal advantage in their varied pursuits, but they generally command the admiration of others; for however men may neglect punctuality themselves, they esteem and commend it in others.

No marvel that so many should fail in business, that so many students should but partially succeed in mental culture, that so many worshippers should derive little profit from their church-going, that so many families should always be in confusion, and that so many persons should be reaping only mortification and disappointment from unsuccessful pursuits; one brief sentence would often explain the enigma—want of punctuality.

The punctual in general, will do more than others; and it will in most cases be done better.

The dilatory schoolboy, the indolent servant, the loitering wife, the negligent husband, and the forgetful master, ought all to become diligent students in the school of punctuality.

In business transactions, in pecuniary engagements, in social visits, and in all matters sanctified by promise, we should earnestly and constantly aim at punctuality.

There is often a tide in the affairs of men, but the disregarders of punctuality are frequently only witnesses of its ebbing.

Many are the causes which lead to a deficiency in punctuality.

A disorderly conducting of affairs may be considered the first; for want of method renders the simplest things intricate, and difficult of execution.

Attempting too much at once, instead of aiding, retards real progression; for there are few so gifted with tact, to do more than one thing really well, at once.

Precipitancy in making engagements, without having duly weighed the various contingencies therewith connected.

But the chiefest of the causes, is the want of a deep impression of its value and importance; let this be engraven on the mind, and every cause will then speedily give way.

Then if thou wouldst not disturb society by thy thoughtless eccentricities; if thou wouldst not be rebuked by the material laws around thee; if thou wouldst not lose thy due weight of influence in society; nor impair

thy true mental and moral currency, set thy mind in order, and be exact in all thy plans, and carry out with unvarying precision thy various schemes, and then having earned—wear the honours of a punctual man.

A CHAPTER ON ANOMALIES.

The best of men are but men at best, and perfection pertaineth not to frail and sinful beings.

In the character and lives of unrenewed men, we look not for conformity to the divine law, or resemblance to the divine image, or the exhibition of a holy spirit.

But if we say that we have received Christ, "then," says the apostle, "we should walk as he also walked."

Alas! how striking are the blemishes of the truly excellent of the earth, and how numerous the anomalies which are daily exhibited.

These inconsistencies and incongruities are often traits in the character of the more superior, among the visible disciples of the Saviour.

Look at it in reference to men's sympathies and emotions.

One man weeps over the sufferings of the enslaved negro abroad; but he is insensible to the appeals of the oppressed and famishing at home.

Another man gives his gold freely to send the missionaries of mercy to the utmost regions of the earth; but he

labours not for the instruction or conversion of the pagans around his own doors.

One class of men sympathise and aid physical suffering only; a second are only interested in the mental cultivation of the ignorant; and a third, feel only for the moral improvement of the vicious.

One man advocates cheap bread; another, wash-houses and cleanliness; and others, the spiritual instruction of the irreligious.

Some men give their gold freely to alleviate wretchedness, but by their calling or traffic, are daily adding to the scene of human degradation and misery.

Some men are for alleviating the punishment of the prisoner, but consider his moral improvement as only of secondary importance.

Many subscribe to the hospital, the penitentiary, and the asylum; but never contemplate or support any scheme for the prevention of causes, by which such institutions are rendered so necessary.

Some men have heads to devise benevolent schemes, but have not hearts liberally to support them.

Many there are who clamor for the extension of human rights, who are despots at home, and exercise their tyranny, wherever they can do so with impunity.

Many have got rich by unrighteous means, and then to make amends, when they die, they build a school, or endow some other benevolent institution.

Some are kind at heart, whose manner is repulsive; while others seem to expect courtesy to be a substitute for principle, goodness, or charity.

How many profess the generous and peaceful religion of Jesus, and yet at best are bigoted sectarians; who

have denunciations for all men who refuse to pronounce the shibboleth of their own party.

From whence arise these anomalies of character?

Is it from the undue elevation of some particular principle, or doctrine, or virtue? Or, is it the result of a circumscribed view of the comprehensive claims of the law of God, and of true religion? Or, is it the result of limited attainments in divine things? Or the want of a more entire and spiritual consecratedness to holiness and God?

These anomalies do not exist in the system of Christianity; for that is one perfect, beautiful, and harmonious whole.

Nor in the precepts of the Saviour; for these include all that is pure, and elevated, and benevolent in morals.

Nor in the nature of the gracious covenant; for here the means of Christian holiness are plenteously provided.

Nor is it want of efficiency in the Holy Spirit, whose influences are effectual to the meetening of the saints for the inheritance of light.

No! it arises from contracted views of what religion involves; from a low state of religious feeling; and the apathetical pursuit of the things which pertain to our everlasting peace.

Doubtless there have been characters, in whom anomalies were only visible to the omniscient eye of Deity; and to imitate these in uniform excellency and spiritual devotedness, is our duty and privilege, as it will also be our dignity, joy, and salvation.

Now the God of peace "make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ."

ON CONSCIENCE.

Conscience is that power or faculty by which we judge of our own moral acts, and pass sentence thereon.

So that every moral action is either approved or condemned by conscience.

It is conscience that gives distinctness and weight to human responsibility; for it exercises its control over every human being.

Yet we are not to conclude that this inward moral sense has passed unscathed by the influence of the fall, and the introduction of sin into our world.

For just as the understanding and judgment and affections have been impaired or polluted, so the conscience has not all its primeval purity or pristine excellency.

Yet as the other powers still answer to some extent the end of man's being, so the conscience is still adapted to promote his real well-being.

Men of all grades of knowledge, from the philosopher to the savage, and of all countries, give evidence of the working of conscience within them.

Yet we see the power of conscience is very varied in different men, in some being more vivid, acute, and influential than in others.

The conscience of every man is either in a state of progressive improvement or deterioration; and to cherish tenderness of conscience is alike the duty and interest of all men.

The scriptures speak of an evil conscience, that is, of a conscience unrenewed, and under the influence of guilt and pollution.

They also reveal to us a conscience that is seared, so as to be past impression, and no longer susceptible of healthy emotion.

It is evident that conscience is inadequate to its task when ignorant of the right rule of action, or when dwelling in the atmosphere of superstition.

The heathen are thus circumstanced, and hence the responses of their consciences are erroneous and delusive.

A good conscience is one of man's most precious blessings; for with it there is a continual feast of enjoyment, and a certain ensurance of real bliss.

But a good conscience has been renewed and sanctified by the blood of the cross, and illumined by the light of the gospel, and made healthy by the influence of the truth.

A good conscience is tender as the apple of the eye; it is ever watchful and vigilant, and ever speaks with the authority of him whose vicegerent it is in the soul.

A good conscience will have respect to the divine character, the divine law, and the divine approbation.

It estimates the divine favour as better than life, and rejoices in the light of his reconciled countenance.

A good conscience will also respect our fellow men, and have regard to the rights of others.

It will be equitable, exact, and benevolent: it will delight in the exercise of kindness, mercy, and compassion.

Christian perfection is the having a conscience void of

offence both towards God and men; and to exercise ourselves to this end is the great work of practical and acceptable piety.

A bad conscience is the plague-spot of the system, and the viper in the bosom: it is the victim's present torment, and the misery which is ominous of the pains of the gnawing worm for ever.

How often hath conscience spoken out in accents of terror to the guilty, and rendered life a load of misery too intolerable to be borne.

It was this that invested with ten-fold horror the writing on the wall of Belshazzar's palace, that caused Felix to tremble on the judgment seat, and drove the betrayer of the Redeemer to self-destruction, and to his own place.

It hath filled many a dying pillow with thorns, and encompassed the entire of the dark valley of death with hideous spectres.

It will be the main tormentor of the finally lost, and is the true worm that expireth not in eternity.

Let thy conscience be conversant with the light and truth of revelation. Let it hearken to the mandate of thy God, and ever be a listener and learner at the feet of Christ.

Let conscience be encouraged in the exercise of its high vocation, and be its admonitions ever received with meekness and respect.

Obey it, and heaven will smile upon thee, and its sunny beams will promote the fruitfulness of thy soul, and the true felicity of thy spirit.

It can make earth even as heaven, and give thee heaven's first fruits, whilst thou art travelling in the dreary deserts of time.

It can make thee so happy that none can make thee miserable, or so wretched that none can make thee joyous.

It can irradiate or darken the horizon of thy soul. It can bless or curse thee.

It can be thy ministering angel, and celestial attendant; or thy haunting demon and hideous spectre, constantly affrighting thy distracted soul.

ON MYSTERIES AND FACTS.

Many persons have rejected the Christian religion on the alleged ground of the mysteries it contains, and have thought themselves rationally justified in so doing.

Such a conclusion however must be the result of a prejudiced spirit, an only partially enlightened mind, a perverted judgment, or a depraved heart.

It is frankly admitted that the Christian religion is one inseparably allied to deep and profound, yea, inexplicable mysteries.

But has the rejector of revelation ever reflected that deists in believing the existence of one infinite and supreme God, admit one of the most incomprehensible of all mysteries into their creed.

For what mind can grasp the immeasurable thought of one eternal, almighty, and universal Spirit! the creator, and the preserver, and the governor of all things.

No mystery can be more sublime or immeasurable than this: and this is but the first link in a chain that is profoundly wonderful, and immeasurably incomprehensible throughout.

The kind, the nature, and the medium of the divine influences in creating and sustaining the universe.

The link which connects him with his creatures, and the deep and indelible impressions he has stamped on the consciences of intellectual and accountable beings.

The simplicity and grandeur of his laws in reference to the physical parts of the world—where, where shall we stop, 'tis mystery surpassing all the powers of the human understanding.

But the sceptical mind often erreth in supposing that Christianity requireth a belief of the nature of the mysteries revealed, instead of a belief simply as to their reality.

The man who doubteth, let him first examine with care and candour the evidence of the truth and authenticity of the scriptures, and pronounce thereon proven or not proven.

If his verdict be not proven, then our reasoning on mysteries must be unavailing, but if his verdict be proven and he agreeth in the divinity of the scriptures, then our observation on mysteries may do some service for him.

For what do the scriptures require of me in reference to mysteries? not that I comprehend what is incompre-

hensible, or grasp what is infinite, or understand what is above my perceptions.

But they require me to admit the truth which the mystery sets forth, not to elucidate it.

Hence the representation of the unity and trinity of the Godhead are most distinctly revealed; but this being beyond the power of my understanding I am required to believe on the testimony of God, and not to know the how and the wherefore, by the finite powers of a man.

If it be said that to believe what we do not clearly understand be puerile and fanatical, then do I appeal to the thousand things by which I am surrounded as an answer to the derogation.

I believe in the immateriality of my mind, but cannot lucidly describe it. I believe in the influence of mind on matter, and again of matter on mind, but know not how it is. I believe in the connexion of mental emotions with the senses, but cannot explain it.

Now if we have sufficient evidence of the truth and inspiration of the scriptures, then do we not decide as to truth and error by bringing its themes to the ordeal of our reason, but by ascertaining their clear and manifest existence in the book thus received as the word of God.

But while Christianity requires of its disciples the reception of mysteries, it is most pre-eminently a religion of facts; and these facts have essentially to do with the most spiritual doctrines of the gospel.

There is the fact of Adam's fall and apostacy from God, and there is the doctrine of man's depravity as the necessary result of bearing the likeness of the mind of our first sire.

There is the doctrine of man's utter helplessness to restore himself to holiness; and there is the fact that all history supplieth in its confirmation.

There is the doctrine of the atonement, and the fact of Christ's actual death as the substitute for sinners.

There is the doctrine of Christ's suretiship; and there is the fact of Christ's resurrection, as demonstrative of his sacrifice being accepted of God.

Now these facts constitute the essence of the gospel; are to be preached by the messengers of mercy, and all who believe them are justified freely by divine grace.

It is presumed, that the believer in these facts necessarily feels the emotions of sorrow for sin, love to the Saviour, hatred of evil, and obedience to the will of God.

Thus the gospel is the testimony of the facts concerning Christ, and his death and resurrection; and faith in these facts bringeth salvation to the soul.

Cavil not then at the mysteries thou canst not understand, but receive them as they are revealed; even as thou dost not cavil at the mysteries of nature, but wonderest and adorest.

Accept with implicit credence the facts that are certified; and thus thou shalt enjoy the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are pardoned, and whose mind, by the power of truth, is savingly renewed.

When thou hast resolved all the mysteries within thee, and all the mysteries which the visible universe furnisheth, then mayest thou marvel that thou canst not resolve all the mysteries of the scriptures.

But even then thou shouldst remember, that the world of mind and thought, must ever be less clear and palpa-

ble to beings clad with earthly bodies, than the world of matter of which their senses take cognizance.

"Secret things belong unto the Lord; but the things which are revealed, to us and to our children."

Much that is now difficult, thou wilt more clearly understand as thou advancest in thy celestial and upward course; but there are themes which clouds will envelope, until thou shalt lay aside thy mortal coil, and bask in the refulgent beams of eternal day.

Be satisfied,—what thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter.

ON PREJUDICE.

Prejudice is an unfavourable state of mind arising from prepossessions which have been formed without due care and examination.

Hence this feeling is often evinced towards persons and things of which its votary is extensively ignorant.

Prejudice is evidently a thing of mist and twilight, and not the creature of the light and day.

Its origin often is ignorance or misapprehension; its spirit, that of precipitancy or rashness; and its influences, therefore, tend to error and evil.

National prejudices, have often been so deep rooted, as to have isolated their inhabitants from each other, or to have kept them in a state of warlike combustion, ready for conflict and revenge.

Ecclesiastical prejudices, have made enemies of the disciples of the same Saviour, and have lit up in almost every land the fires of persecution.

Prejudices of class, have not only separated the rich from the poor, but often placed them in an attitude of envy and unfriendliness towards each other.

Prejudices against creeds and systems, have frequently grown into sectarian dislikes, bigotry, and personal defamation.

Personal prejudice, has often been grounded on the features of the countenance, on the sound of the voice, or even on the gait of the individual.

Prejudice is awakened in some, by names and appellations to which their own vague minds have attached ignorant or erroneous distinctions.

Often the conduct of one individual has excited prejudice against the party to which he was attached; and thus tories and whigs, churchmen and dissenters, have been equally charged and condemned on the delinquency of one of their order.

Prejudice is pestiferous to the powers of the mind, as it warps the judgment, and deceives the mind.

It is a sin against society, and contains the elements of injustice and malevolence.

It is a heinous transgression against God, whose laws demand the exemplification of equity, goodness, and charity.

Prejudice is often as foolish as it is evil, but its influences are blighting, anti-social, and irreligious.

The antidote to prejudice is candour, which never dealeth in inuendoes, nor cherisheth suspicion, nor

thinketh evil without a cause, but rejoices in purity, goodness, and truth.

Much of prejudice is traceable to the spirit of party, which is conveyed to the mind by the teacher of youth, and by the preacher of religion, as well as by the pen of the historian.

The customs of society, and the conversations of the social hearth, often tend to engraft it upon the youthful mind.

How dire and awful have been the effects of prejudice!

It hath often crushed the rising genius—impeded the path of the virtuous—blasted the reputation of the excellent—and beclouded the prospects of the most deserving.

It hath influenced juries in their verdicts, and judges in their decisions, and legislators in their enactments.

It hath often excited popular tumults, and hurried men on to deeds of violence, fury, and bloodshed.

It was prejudice that prevented many of the Jews from examining the credentials of the Messiah; that blinded those who heard his discourses and saw his miracles; and which led the sanhedrim to seek for his condemnation and death.

It was this that excited the people to demand Barabbas in preference to Jesus; and which filled the air of Jerusalem with the malignant exclamations of, "Crucify him! crucify him!"

How utterly inconsistent is it with reason, and how totally repugnant to revelation.

How it should be loathed and abhorred! How men should seek its annihilation in themselves, and its overthrow and extinction in the world!

Then, the pagan would hearken with simplicity to the missionary's theme of the cross; and the Romanist read and judge for himself out of the unadulterated volume of truth.

Then, the coloured man would be hailed as an equal and a brother, and slavery would retire to her native domains of darkness and cruelty.

Then, every man would be the friend of his species, and all distinctions would be swallowed up in generous, overflowing, and universal charity.

Then, the second table of the law would be exemplified in the experience of every human being—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

In the scriptures, prejudice is reprobated; in Christ's holy and benevolent life it was practically condemned, and it is utterly excluded from that world, where nothing that defileth or injureth can enter.

Prejudice is a practical falsehood, and it must be finally doomed to the dwelling where will be consigned "all that loveth and maketh a lie."

Reader! judge not merely by appearances; nor judge before the time; nor decide by prejudging; but ever in this, as in all thy transactions with thy fellow men, carry out the divine maxim, by "doing unto others as thou wouldest they should do unto thee."

ON RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION.

"PUT up thy sword again into his place," was the peremptory command of Christ to Peter when he had drawn it for the defence of his Lord and Master.

Even the sacred person of the Saviour was not to be defended by the power of a carnal weapon.

How much it had been for the church's purity and real prosperity, if this principle had ever been thoroughly understood, and consistently maintained.

The early followers of Jesus had to encounter persecution from the Jewish authorities, from pagan rulers, and from the rude and excited populace.

In these instances we see sin, and Satan, and his votaries, openly allied, and conflicting with truth and holiness.

Surely this might have sufficed, and while the world must ever be the foe of the spiritual church, the followers of Jesus should have been the devoted and affectionate friends of one another.

But alas! regal patronage and state control have ever given to the party in the ascendant the authority to oppress, and often openly to persecute those who could not conform in all things to the state religion.

This commingling of the earthy with the heavenly, the precious with the vile, mammon and truth, has been one of the foulest stains on the history of the visible church of the Redeemer.

But however kings or magistrates, priests or councils,

may have sanctioned their oppressive enactments, they are utterly discountenanced by the Author, the letter, and the spirit of Christianity. Jesus sanctioned no other weapon for the defence or the diffusion of his gospel, than the truth.

The letter of the divine statutes enjoins to all men, love, goodness, and mercy: and the spirit and genius of the Christian religion is glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, and good-will towards men.

The darkness of error must be chased away by the celestial beams of truth; and the rebellion of the heart must be subdued by the constraining influence of the love of Christ.

Men are to be enlightened, not coerced; entreated, not threatened with penal statutes; and if obdurate in the maintenance of error, yet they must be the objects of our compassion, as to their "own master they must stand or fall."

Ours, is to instruct, exhort, entreat, and warn: it pertaineth to God alone to punish, for vengeance belongeth exclusively to him.

Error or sin in the church must be brought under the discipline which Christ has appointed, which, under no aspect, invests with authority to punish beyond exclusion from the privileges of fellowship with the disciples.

Persecution, therefore, is based on a wicked and arrogant assumption of the divine prerogative, as God hath never given lordship of conscience to another.

The fire of persecution is the fire from beneath, and agreeth with the spirit of the wicked one; the fire from above is that of love, which blesses and curses not.

Persecution must ever defeat itself, for mind can no more be acted upon by brute force, than inanimate matter by an intellectual harangue.

Persecution may multiply the number of hypocrites and the superstitious, but moral suasion only, can bow men to the authority and will of God.

Persecution! whence thy authority? from whom thy commission? what the character of thy credentials?

A holy God never commanded thee to injure thy fellows; Christ's commissions refer only to works of piety and mercy; and the credentials he furnishes are the graces and fruits of his own Spirit, which prayed on Calvary for his very murderers.

Persecution is of hell, and is enkindled by the spirit of him who tempted Cain to slay his righteous brother.

The emblems of Christianity are the lamb, not the lion —the dove, not the vulture.

Persecution is presumption against God — a crime against humanity—and a libel on religion.

Persecution may appeal to antiquity for precedents—to councils, for patronage—to state enactments, for authority —to the sword, for its enforcements—but the Saviour, or revelation, or Christian principle, can have no lot nor part in the matter.

Would we that others should persecute us—manacle our limbs—incarcerate our persons—or take away our lives? If not, then how can we consent for these things to be done to others, whose rights, and freedom, and lives, are equally sacred and precious with our own.

Persecute not with thy tongue, or it is evident if thou

hadst opportunity a more deadly weapon would be employed.

Persecute not by thy spirit, by cherishing a bigoted state of heart towards thy fellow Christians; but let love have the ascendency, and breathe peace and charity towards all men.

Among the persecuted, what a glorious line of holy men, from Abel to the prophets—from the prophets to the Baptist—from Jesus to Stephen—and from Stephen to to the last of the apostles—and from the apostles to the time of Constantine — and from Constantine to Luther—and from Luther to the puritans—and from the puritans to the missionaries of the cross, in the islands of Madagascar and of the Southern seas.

Heaven's most exalted ranks have been filled up with those who have come out of great tribulation, and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

For the persecutor, without repentance unfeigned, there can be no hope of divine mercy; and for the persecuted, there are reserved the joys and dignities of co-heirship with Christ, in the glories which eternity shall reveal, "For if we suffer with him we shall also be glorified together."

ON CUSTOM.

Custom or habit is one of the despots who exercise a universal influence; and by whose ubiquity and power, people of all realms and nations are held in degrading vassalage.

Few have the moral courage necessary to their emancipation, and therefore the mass, hug their chains as though they were the emblems of honour and happiness.

Custom is presented to us in thousands of varied and conflicting forms.

What is considered the perfection of beauty and propriety in one country, is associated with the disgusting, and even the loathsome in another.

Custom has sometimes ventured to sanctify physical deformities, and in other countries to enjoin the means of procuring them.

Custom has alike patronized cleanliness and filth; that which is natural, and that which is artificial; that which tends to health, and that which tends to disease; that which elevates, and that which debases; that which adds to the sum of bliss, and that which adds to the increase of misery.

The tattoed Indian, the coloured Hottentot, the tottering lady of China, and the rouged belle of Europe, are all so many varieties and specimens of custom's votaries.

Custom brandishes the tomahawk of the savage, bears about the stiletto of the Spaniard; denominates the brute

power of the Englishman, science; and reckons the deliberate aim of the duellist, as the acme of earthly courage and honour.

Custom has legalized fraud, even in the commerce of human beings; it has extolled the warrior as a patriot, and denominated the field of gore and horror, the bed of glory.

Custom has ever been reiterating the cry of revenge, and notwithstanding the direct and merciful bearing of the New Testament code, clamoureth loudly for blood, for blood.

Custom has established her empire in the senate, on the bench, and in the jury-box.

She has her advocates in the courts of law; her instruments of service in the prison—in the penal settlement—and on the gallows.

Custom influenceth the merchant on the 'change, the tradesman in his shop, the mechanic in the factory, and the labourer in the field.

Custom sets up her rule in the cathedral, and often swayeth her sceptre in the chapel of the dissenter, and in the meeting-house of the friend.

Custom controlleth the multifarious exercises of the house-wife, and has her altar in the kitchen, the sitting-room, and the sleeping apartment.

Custom has the patronage of the larder, of the wine-cellar, and of the dining-room.

Custom has been the oracle of toasts, and the presiding genius of the bacchanalian board.

Thus it has been the panderer of appetite, and the ally of intemperance, riot, and profligacy.

Many customs are gross and impure; others, foolish and extravagant; others, expensive and ruinous; and not a few, debasing and destructive.

Some customs are superstitious; others cruel, and derogatory to the intellectual and moral character of man.

Man as an intellectual being, should be guided by reason; as a moral being, by principle; and as an accountable being, by revelation.

There may be customs of small moment, and others of beneficial tendency; but in all things, let wisdom direct thy steps, and utility be the end of thy course.

Let not custom be the regulator of thy life, much less the imposer of thy creed.

Men are accountable to society and to God for their personal actions and influence; therefore, let it be thy aim to be found a good and faithful steward of what heaven has committed to thy trust. Especially, see to it, that customs do not deteriorate thy physical, mental, or moral character; that they do not blind thy conscience, and prevent thy improvement.

Let not thy habits be injurious to those around thee, or pestiferous to the world in which thou livest.

Be it thy aim to add to the sum of the intelligence, the morality, and the happiness of thy species.

Be it thy end to glorify God in all things, whose thou art, and whom, by the most weighty obligations, thou art bound to love and serve.

A scriptural faith, a sanctified heart, and a holy life, constitute the elements of that character which God will accept and bless.

ON JUDGING OF CHARACTER.

We cannot live without coming in contact with a variety of characters; and therefore to have a true method of estimating them is desirable and important.

Some persons estimate with their eyes, others with their ears; some with both, others with neither.

The eye often erreth, and the ear often deceiveth; and therefore an infallible judgment is not ensurable from them.

We cannot live and board with all we know; and if we could, years would be requisite to ascertain principles, and draw sure and correct inferences.

Some men, like the shallow brook, are easily fathomed; but others, like deep waters, are with difficulty sounded; and some set human investigation and analysis at defiance.

In labouring to understand others, we should bring to the ordeal discernment, experience, candour, and charity.

Much knowledge may be gained by a vigilant discerning eye, and an attentive ear: but this should pass through the fiery ordeal of past experience and general observation, and then with a candid and charitable spirit, the conclusion may be drawn.

Expect not too much from any man; remembering thine own frailty and imperfections. The sun has his dark spots, and the moon her deep shadows, and few days pass over without the fairest horizon, being dimmed by the flitting cloud. So man at his best estate, pertaineth to sin and vanity.

Let charity ever aid thee in the judgment which thou formest. Weigh well all circumstances, and let not mere suspicions or surmisings turn the scale against thee; but rather where'er thou canst, extenuate and think the best.

Consider no man vile because one frailty cleaveth to him; nor no man hopeless, morally, however fallen; for who is without fault?—And grace divine, can change and elevate the most degraded.

Some men do trumpet forth their praises, and laud and recommend themselves: in many cases this should lead to scrutinize the coin they wish to pass, for were it manifestly good, their praises were unneeded. But often this ariseth from a mental kind of weakness, or from a tendency to vanity, and in all points else, they may be sound and worthy of respect.

But ever guard against the flatterer, whose tongue is dipped in oil, and whose smooth words are often to be dreaded more than the loud and boisterous din of anger.

And watch also with careful vigilance, those who seem to have an overflowing stock of words, and deal them out without discretion; no one should have thy confidence, whose tongue is unsubordinated to stern integrity and truth.

It would be useless surely to speak of fleeing those who deal in calumny; and who can ply their half-expressed and half-suppressed insinuations, or who enviously detract from the well-earned fame of those around them.

If truth or generosity be only questionable residents,

it would indeed be wise to seek for social converse, or friendly intercourse elsewhere.

But if truth, and love of truth be deep implanted principles, it would be strange indeed to find a rotten structure resting thereupon.

Let not a homely garb, or tongue whose speech is rude, or dialect provincial, lead thee to presume that ignorance or want of worth is there. For there are many peasants, children of nature's true nobility, men of stirling honesty and principle, who would accept no bribe to do a mean degrading deed.

The eye of Deity often discerns among the poor, whose education has been limited indeed, a sense of sterling conscientiousness, a glowing heart of goodness, and a hand of liberality, which ministereth most freely, as it may possess ability.

And many are there who in costume, manners, and estate, and we may add in learning and polite accomplishments, should be men of true intrinsic excellence, whose want of principle, and inherent baseness, bring them down as fit companions for the most degraded of mankind.

Judge not then by appearance, but weigh the moral elements of the character, as developed in the uniform and well sustained actions of the life.

But where a doubt prevails, pause, or let charity throw in her casting vote; or wait until that day when light eternal shall make every character and heart transparent to God and angels, and the countless myriads standing round the final bar of doom.

ON ANGER.

That uneasy excitement which is denominated anger, is not always evil in itself; but the evil of anger ariseth from a tendency of mind to it; from being easily brought under its dominion, and from allowing it to be a welcome resident in our bosoms.

Be not soon angry, and be not angry without a cause; and remain not under its influence; are maxims which come to us clothed with the authority of heaven.

A proud spirit, and a froward and unsubdued heart, are the chief causes of precipitate anger and hasty wrath.

The humble, meek, and lowly are not easily provoked, and cherish not false estimates of their pre-eminent excellencies and importance.

A man incapable of anger is manifestly deficient in some of the emotions which belong to our nature, and friendship with such an one would be as undesirable as with the man who is soon angry, or angry without a cause.

An angry man carrieth about him the coals of strife, and on any emergency, his own breath enkindleth therewith the fire of wrath.

Anger is the highway to many sins, and the downward path to complicated sorrows.

If thou wouldest be dignified and happy, useful and respected, an ornament to morality and a witness for religion, then be not "hasty in thy spirit to be angry."

If thou wouldest be the joy of thy family, the beloved of the social circle, and the useful disciple of Jesus, avoid an angry spirit; and tread in his steps who was meek and lowly in heart, and therein thou shalt also find rest to thy soul.

Yet there is an anger which thou mayest cherish; an anger against thyself for thy want of wise discernment, for thy lack of prudence, for thy deficiency of duty, for thy lingering progress in the way of truth, and for thy unfruitfulness in the things pertaining to thy God.

Against thyself be angry, for the remembrance of wasted time, perverted mercies, and abused immunities and privileges which the goodness of thy God hath given thee.

Be angry with thyself that thou so often hast been angry without a cause, and that thine anger has so often burned against others instead of thyself.

And anger may be manifested against the evil which surrounds thee. Be angry with oppression, but oh, pity in thy soul the ruthless spirit of the oppressor.

Be angry with sin, but let thy bowels of mercy yearn over the sinner, and imitate him who when he had pronounced the woes on the impenitent Jews, finished the affecting scene by weeping over their devoted city.

Yet righteous anger must be vigilantly guarded or it will degenerate into unholy wrath, and be the guilt and misery of him who cherisheth it.

Remember that the righteous governor of the universe will deal to all men according as their works shall be; and therefore be not hasty in thy spirit for vengeance to come upon thine adversary.

Cherish a pacific and benignant spirit, and let patience have its perfect work, so shalt thou enjoy sweet serenity arising from a heart environed by gentleness and love.

ON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.

The punishment of criminals ought ever to comprise three ends :—the vindication of the law's authority; the protection of the community; and the reclamation of the offender.

Mercy mingled with justice, will most effectually insure these ends being accomplished.

Severity will render the laws abhorrent, and make men loath to inflict their penalties; will thus increase the risk of society being injured by the lawless, and will exasperate the worst feelings of their hearts, against those who make and enforce them.

Laws of benevolent aspect being easily enforced and carried out, will prevent men calculating on successful evasion, will be maintained by the suffrages of all classes of society, and will exert a kindly influence on the hearts of those who are to bear their penalties.

Men are not to be amended by coercion or physical force; and in the most vicious there are latent feelings, which if elicited may tell on their improvement and elevation.

The highest penalty attachable to the violation of any law, is the punishment of death.

It is quite clear that in the infliction of this punishment the reclamation of the offender is relinquished; so that, if our three points with which we set out be all essential elements in justly inflicted punishments, then, the taking of human life is wrong to the individual, as it renders his improvement impossible.

Besides, it equally violates our first principle, where we hold, that mercy should always be connected with judgment. And all experience proves that it does not more effectually secure the protection of the community.

Appeals have been made in favour of capital punishments to the Levitical economy: but who that pleads the punishments of that temporary dispensation, would advocate the putting to death of all and sundry, who should irreverently disobey their parents—blaspheme the name of God—or violate the sanctity of the sabbath?

I confess that to put to death the murderer, has been the custom of most civilized nations, and that the feelings probably of the mass, would favour the punishment.

It must be conceded too, that scripture phraseology is very strong, on shedding the blood of the man who hath shed the blood of another.

But is it evident that the spirit and genius of the gospel, and New Testament dispensation, will warrant the maintenance of that divine command, any more in the case of the murderer, than in those other instances to which capital punishments were originally attached? We think not.

The spirit of the gospel is that of pre-eminent good-

ness. It enforces mercy, and not severity; it urgeth kindness, not wrath; it demandeth forgiveness, not revenge.

But can it be said by any parity of reasoning, that goodness, or kindness, or mercy is shown to the man whose life is cut off, and who, by the hand of the executioner is hurried into eternity?

However vile the criminal, or crimson-dyed his crimes, yet he is an accountable creature; his soul is of boundless price; his destiny must be one of eternal weal or woe.

Christianity demandeth that every effort should be made to save his soul from death, and hide the multitude of his sins.

But amidst the anxieties and horrors of a public execution, how hard the task to procure that calm and tranquil state of mind essential to reflection, and to true repentance unto life.

Besides, no chance is afforded for the proofs of real reformation being given, or of restitution being made to the laws so violated.

Our land indeed hath cause to blush and weep o'er her monstrous sanguinary code of laws;—laws, which until recently, handed to the public executioner, and strangled on the gallows in the light of day, the man who purloined a paltry sum of worthless dust, or stole a sheep, or fixed his name unfaithfully to bill or bond.

And thousands who might have been restored to moral health and soundness, have been hurried out of life, without a thought or care as to their fitness for futurity.

Thus God's fair image, which sin hath marred, but not effaced, hath been trampled on by laws that might have had their origin in all the smoke, and fury, and revenge of hell beneath.

Happy are our eyes that have witnessed those statutes, written as with blood, extensively obliterated, and the escutcheon of our nation's glory, in some degree purged from her crimson stains.

But yet we plead for the entire abolition of the deliberate work of death.

Let no man be the hired servant of the state to strangle one, for whom the Lord of glory died.

Even let the murderer live; but so confined, that his hand can ne'er again inflict a deed so horrible.

Enfettered as a heinous culprit, let him toil out a life of guilty degradation, and wait the summons from the Judge of all.

And let the moral teacher visit him, and ply his conscience with eternal truth; let mercy thus be mingled with his punishment, and by the blessing of the Source of every good, he may be won, and live to show his soul's compunction and abhorrence of his crimes.

Facts have well proved that seeing men expire as objects of vindictive punishment, has never softened those who have commenced a course of lawlessness; that men have robbed each other with the suspended body of a fellow criminal before their eyes; for fear is but one means of deterring men from crimes, and generally one of the smallest efficacy.

If capital inflictions were abandoned, then worthless men would not escape convictions from juries who had

rather break an oath, than leave a man to die through the verdict they would give.

Then too, our legislators would awaken to the great importance of preventing crime, and raising men by education and religious means, from a state of exposedness to temptation's baits.

Instead of licensing some thousands to dole out the liquid which inflames the brain, and excites to every deed of sin, and thus to people jails and hulks, they would abhor a revenue arising from a nation's profligacy, and strive to stem the tide of inebriation, and raise to dignified sobriety the myriads of the realm.

Let Ireland's moral reformation show to legislators, moralists, and all who love their fellow men, how crime may be prevented, and how the office of the executioner may extensively become a sinecure.

ON INTEMPERANCE.

Intemperance is defined, excess in meats, or drinks, or passions.

A man may have an intemperate spirit, or give way to intemperate practices.

Gluttony is intemperance in meats; inebriety is the consequence of intemperance in exciting drinks.

Moderation is the rational and scriptural rule in the use of lawful things—abstinence in reference to things of evil or even of doubtful tendency.

An immoderate use of any created good is a perversion of it, and thus the blessing is converted into a curse.

Abstemiousness in meats is conducive both to health of body and vigour of mind. Repletion renders medicines necessary. Rigid moderation may in the main dispense with them; but intemperance in drink not only produces disease, but the train of its dire results is one of sorrow, wretchedness, and woe.

It is the panderer to every vice—the patron of shame—the herald of misery—the instigator of crime—and the premonition of early decay, of premature death, and everlasting destruction.

Intoxicating drinks insidiously undermine the powers of the mind, and the strength of the body, and the comforts of life.

They first overcome the natural dislike—nature's antipathy; they then become agreeable; afterwards, necessary, and often ultimately ruinous. They flatter, fascinate, and destroy.

The physical influence of these intoxicating drinks is to increase the action of the heart—hurry impetuously through the system, the fluid of life—quicken the pulse —excite the brain—redden the countenance—and if persisted in, spread impotence or temporary paralysis over the whole frame.

Yet how diverse in appearance the effects they produce. Of one they make a companion for swine—of another, a serpent—and of a third, a tiger; one is transformed into a filthy nuisance—another, into a fool—and a third, into a madman; one grins with idiotcy—and another raves with fury.

What misery intemperance produces in the social circle —breaking the hearts of fathers, mothers, and wives; overwhelming with shame sisters, and children, and friends!

How it is the main auxiliary to insubordination, violent assaults, and blackest crimes! How it tends to embezzlement, theft, manslaughter, assassinations, murders, and suicides.

It crowds the police offices with cases, the prisons with inmates, the calendars with criminals, the hulks and penal settlements with convicts, and the scaffold with its sacrifices.

It filleth the poor-house with paupers, the penitentiary with vagrants, the hospital with diseased, and asylums with the insane.

It is directly hostile to education, industry, science, learning, and religion.

It is unfavourable to useful trade, to social order, and to a nation's prosperity.

Its trophies have been gathered from all generations; it has been the curse of most countries, and the immediate destroyer of unnumbered millions of beings.

It has corrupted the youth—degraded the father—and polluted the mother and the wife.

It has entered into the sanctuary of God—increasing apostates—impeding truth—preventing conversions—and, in some cases, has degraded the deacon and elder from his office, and blotted out the stars of the churches.

It had gone forth in its career of blackness, crime, and woe, and cursing, without direct opposition, until men conspired to assail it, and wisely became pledged to effect its annihilation.

Thus its crowded ranks have become thinned, some of its champions reclaimed, and the cause of sobriety and happiness extended.

Men may use stimulating drinks without excess, but not without injury.

He who would be wise, safe, and happy, will avoid them altogether. If by using them philosophers, statesmen, moralists, even divines have been overcome, who will presume on his own strength? or depend on his own stedfastness? Is it not vastly more desirable, to abstain even from the appearance of evil?

Let not appetite allure, nor customs enfetter thee; but be resolved, at any rate, to escape the path of the intemperate, the drunkard's death, and grave, and perdition.

ON MONEY.

Money, says the preacher, "answereth all things;" that is, in relation to trade, and commerce, and the attainment of most earthly enjoyments. Money is the *sine quâ non*—the thing of indispensable importance.

With money, under the ordinary events of life, may be obtained the daily bread, the suitable raiment, the comfortable dwelling, the convenient furniture, and luxuries adapted to soften down the ruggedness of life.

With money, mental lore may be obtained for the mind; stores of ancient or modern intellectual treasures become our own.

With money, we may enjoy the varieties, and recreations, and instructions of travel; visit the memorable places of earth, and become acquainted with the inventions of art, and the productions of nature, and the wonders of science.

With the aid of money, we may become familiar with all ranks, and be easily introduced into the highest orders of society.

With money, we may purchase titles, obtain extraordinary distinctions, and be ever followed by the breeze of popular applause.

Money is so dazzling, and withal, so mysterious in its influence, that it often stands instead of learning, or gifts, or principles, or worth.

But money is a talent committed to our trust, and of which an exact account will hereafter be demanded.

Perverted, abused, it will cover us with guilt and shame, and sink us into everlasting shades of dire adversity.

If thou squanderest money, or divertest it from its lawful and proper course, an injury is committed, which God will reckon robbery on the poor, the widow, and the fatherless.

For money held as a deposit for the weal of others, may be fraught with blessings to those around us. It may lighten the load of anxious sorrow; it may dispel the chilling winds of keen adversity; it may bless the smitten child of poverty with gladness, and make the widow's heart to dance for joy.

Money, with generous hand and prudent mind, expended, may save from the untimely grave, and stop the desponding man who is hastening towards the steep of self-destruction.

By means of money, interesting, useful, and sacred books may be diffused among the abodes of illiteracy, ignorance, and irreligion. Especially, that book of books which makes its earnest reader, wise unto eternal life.

The money cursed and wasted in one flitting year, at the gambling board, the race-course, and the houses licensed to dispense the liquid fiery woes, would fill the world with that blessed volume, and give to every man, in his own tongue, the records of salvation.

By money too, the ship is freighted with the band of holy men who cross the treacherous ocean—not to explore an unknown continent—not to engage in lawful merchandize—much less in lawless war and rapine, but to proclaim to dying savages, and idolatrous hordes of men, the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

By money, schools may be built in every crowded district, to teach the rising youth the knowledge needful both for this life, and that which is to come.

The world is rich enough for every work of kind humanity, of true philanthropy, and piety divine.

But while children of this world supply with liberal hand their own, how scantily the treasury of our God receives the tribute of his people. How many charities of highest worth, but linger on, and only linger, because they have not means of growth and vigour given them.

Is it not strange that those who say they have found the peerless pearl of price, should show such strong attachment to the glittering dust of earth? that they should follow fashion's costly eccentricities, in dress, in furniture, and style of living, and should dole out with niggard hand to meet the claims of heaven and earth, of God and man.

Such love of Mammon was not known by the early followers of the Lamb: they counted naught their own, but all things Christ's, and with joy to poorest friends they cheerfully dealt out as they had need.

O Christian! let not the love of filthy lucre chain down thy soul to earth, but if thou art indeed born from above, prove thy high original, thy celestial descent, by seeking treasures in the skies.

No man of sordid mind or covetous heart, belongs indeed to Jesus' family.

The influence of the cross melts down the iciness and selfishness of human nature, and moulds it in the Saviour's generous image.

The love of Christ constrains to deeds of goodness and

compassion, and thus laid out, thy wealth is lent unto the Lord, and he with ample interest will repay thee all again.

But money idolized or wasted in the service of the world and sin, will fill thy dying reminiscenses with pain and horror, unless thou art become so callous by its withering influence, to feel no agony until thou knowest by sad experience, the gnawings of the deathless worm, and feel the kindlings of that flame that never shall expire.

THE RICH AND THE POOR.

In all ages and countries, the two distinctions of rich and poor have existed. It is equally clear that Divine Providence has to do immediately with these distinctions; and that while God elevates one to the throne, he fixes another in the path of poverty and toil.

Probably the amount of real enjoyment is not very dissimilar between them, though the kind and quality may widely differ.

The poor have often health, vigour, and refreshing repose, and true contentment, which all the riches of the affluent cannot purchase, and which crowned heads may well envy.

In the main, the less of the world, and the less anxiety as to its disposal and retention, and the less fear as to its dispossession.

With food and raiment, and the addition of a good conscience, real contentment may be possessed, and such may have a perpetual feast.

It is a truth, that our real wants are few; but when we pass from these to our ideal ones, the list increases as the sources of enjoyment are multiplied; and as salt water increaseth the thirst, so increased worldly good may add to the intensity of the desires, but never satisfies them.

But neither a state of riches nor poverty can be allied with true felicity, unless sanctified by the influences of acceptable piety.

On the rich devolve many duties in connexion with their possessions,—as a right apprehension of the tenure on which they are lent—as to their right application, and as to using them without loving or perverting them, and as to faithful stewardship, which may be surrendered at last with joy and not with grief.

Wealth is a talent, and on its wise and righteous application, eternal consequences are suspended.

To be rich, and poor in spirit, and self-denying in life, men have often found to involve great moral conflicts in which the victory is with difficulty obtained.

The rich have and hold their riches as the stewards of God, and the trustees of the poor, and indigent, and afflicted. Therefore it behoveth them to give freely of their abundance to him who needeth, and to do it heartily, and with delight as unto the Lord.

The rich are often tempted to fancy that their wealth renders them independent; while the truth is, that dependency necessarily increaseth as our worldly goods are multiplied.

Often the more riches, the more houses and lands, and hence the more servants and the more cares.

Of what is the rich man independent? obviously not of the poor. To them he must look for all the necessaries as well as the comforts of life.

The monarch is served from the field, and the ploughman ministereth to the daily bread of the noble.

From whence do we derive our food, and raiment, and fire, and furniture; let the peasant, and the weaver, and the miner, and the mechanic, answer the interrogation.

Our tables are laden with luxuries, but the slave and perilled mariner have provided and brought them for our use.

The library at once contributes to our instruction and amusement, but how many sons of toil must expend their energies before we can possess a single pamphlet.

It is manifest then, that riches and dependence are invariably allied, if not in the abstract synonymous.

Then let these things be remembered by the rich; and they will feel that kindness to the poor is a debt they owe, and not a favour they confer.

Then will their spirit be gentle, and courteous, and benignant; and their conduct bountiful and kind.

Thus the rich will ensure the esteem, and the grateful love of the poor, and their influence for good be increased manifold. Thus too, will they ensure the favour which God has promised to those who consider the poor; and reflect the image of the beneficent Father of all our mercies.

By the poor a recognition of the hand of Divine Pro-

vidence in the arrangement of our concerns, is a subject fraught with the most important instruction.

If God choose our lot, however comparatively small, it must be wise, and righteous, and good. Contentment with it, in a godly spirit, is great and indescribable gain.

Sanctified poverty is direct conformity to the life and station of the world's Redeemer; and few like him have *nowhere* to lay their head.

Praise honours poverty, prayer sweetens it, and patience meekly acquiesces in it.

Poverty can only be a degradation, when it is the result of extravagance or indolence; and it is only a curse, when it lodgeth in an unsubdued heart, and produceth an impatient and rebellious spirit.

Let not the poor man envy the rich, for the prosperity of the wicked, is often a preparative for the day of slaughter.

Remember, this is but their transitory state of being, and Lazarus the beggar was much more favoured in having his evil things here, and his good hereafter, than Dives who had his viands and purple for a day, and the evil of the divine wrath for ever!

Unite with poverty, prayer for all thy need, and be anxious for nothing, "and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep thy heart and mind through Christ Jesus."

Poverty and affliction with the people of God, Moses preferred to the crown of Pharaoh, and the riches of Egypt, and the pleasures of sin; for he had respect to the recompense of reward.

Let the rich kindly and generously employ the poor; and let the poor freely and cheerfully labour for the rich; and let mutual dependence promote mutual sympathy, esteem, and affection. "For the rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the maker of them all."

ON YOUTH.

It is scarcely possible to over-estimate the importance of youth.

It is as the spring of the year; and the summer's abundance, and the autumnal gatherings, greatly depend upon it.

It is as the morning of life, and the succeeding day of our probation must be materially affected by it.

How important are its bearings on the individual, and on the domestic and social circles of life.

Its influences for good or evil relate to all time, and equally to all eternity.

It is generally the key-stone of the personal building, and the foundation of weal or woe.

On the principles and actions of youth, depend greatly the practices and experience of after-life.

There are many things in youth to be studiously avoided, especially self-confidence, precipitate friendships, evil books, and unprincipled society.

Self-confidence will lead to bitter dissatisfaction; and

rash friendships, to keen disappointments; evil books, to moral contamination; and bad company, to the adoption and practice of iniquity.

Among the things to be avoided, we would also include the race-course, that scene of dissipation; the theatre, with its deadly atmosphere; the tavern, with its polluting influences; the cigar shop, with its dissolute society; and the gaming house, with its damning practices.

We would guard our youth too, against assumed pompousness of manner, and pride of spirit, and vanity of heart.

Against indolence that rust of the soul, and that tempter of the evil one.

The morning hours of youth are too precious to be wasted; its powers, too sacred to be perverted; and its mental and moral concerns, too momentous to be neglected.

How many in mature life have mourned over the infatuations of their early days, and have been made to bear the iniquities of their youth.

How many momentous things there are in youth to be pursued; the attainment of knowledge, and the acquisition of wisdom; the adoption of sound principles, and the cultivation of a right practice.

It is now habits should be formed, self-government established, and pure personal religion chosen, which will be the safety of the spirit and the ornament of the life.

Most men of pious celebrity, have cried after celestial wisdom in their youth.

We may presume thus of Abel, but it is evident in

Joseph, and Samuel, and David. We see it also in Jabez and Josiah, in Daniel and the Hebrew worthies, and in the disciple whom Jesus especially loved.

Youthful piety is peculiarly acceptable to God, and is favoured with the energy and time, which the cause of religion requires from its disciples.

The youthful Christian is generally active, zealous, and devoted.

To youth we would say, diligently improve your advantages, occupy usefully your time, and guard with jealous solicitude your reputation.

Be gentle towards your juniors, respectful to your equals, deferential to your seniors, and courteous and kind to all.

Reverence parental authority, and labour to increase the amount of parental comfort and joy.

Act humanely as a man, rationally as an intelligent being, devoutly as a Christian, and humbly as one whose experience is at present necessarily defective.

Seek the really good, and not the uncertain great; be the disciple of utility, not of show; of moderation, not of ambition.

Be thy companion, the bible; thy friends, the truly religious; thy Saviour Jesus; that thy portion may be God's favour in time, and his glory for ever.

Seek the divine blessing; and thus if God be acknowledged, he will direct thy steps. Commit thy way to him, and he will bring it to pass.

Labour to estimate all things according to the real value they bear; and to know this, try them by the unerring rule of God's holy and infallible word.

Youth often errs by the cherishing of unreasonable hopes, without a due admixture of prudence and caution.

Forget not that youth is mortal, as the sepulchres of the juvenile dead abundantly testify.

Then let cheerfulness be united with seriousness, and joy with gravity, and activity with a life of holy waiting for the great momentous change, which awaits all the human race.

Sound sense will carry thee through the secular scenes of the world; sound principles steer thee safely amidst the sunken rocks and hidden shoals of thy earthly voyage; and a sound practice, the result of sound faith, bring that voyage to a safe and joyous termination.

From our youth, our senates of legislation, our courts of judicature, our halls of science, our academies of learning, our sanctuaries of religion, must be supplied.

To them we look for the philosophers, patriots, philanthropists, and preachers of the coming generation.

Then may we labour to sound the true key-note, and make the right impression on our growing youth, and pray that "our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace." "Happy is that people that is in such a case, yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

OLD AGE.

Old age is venerable to the eye, and when united with wisdom and religion commandeth the esteem of all.

But how sad and painful is it, to behold the hoary head accompanied with ignorance, neglect of holy things, and unpreparedness for the dread verities of a future state.

The very aged compared with the multitude who die before they reach it, is truly rare, and remindeth us how vain and short is human life.

No doubt that certain courses tend to premature old age, and there are many wicked who do not live out half their days.

A plain and simple style of living, with early rising and abstinence from the inebriating cup: moderation too in meats—a cultivation of a cheerful state of mind—all tend to sweeten and prolong our stay on earth.

But all the care that mortals sometimes use is vain; and often the best and worthiest of our race become the inmates of an early grave.

Long life was once the subject of God's promise, but that belonged to a dispensation especially allied to earthly promises. And while we can't dispute the tendency of true religion to multiply e'en temporal good, yet the promises belonging to the gospel, rather tend to the unmeasured joys and glories of the life to come.

And it is certain too, that age, and sorrow, and pain, have long been wedded in indissoluble bonds.

Man may outlive his dearest relatives and friends and become a stranger in his native place. He may outlive

enjoyment of corporeal blessings; and weakness, infirmities, and pain, may be left his sole attendants. He may survive until he knows by evidences that cannot be disputed, that he is viewed by many as an intruder on another generation.

Besides, is it to be desired to outlive the capacity of receiving, or the power of doing, good.

An aged, withered, earthly frame, is but ill fitted as the vehicle of the mental and the moral powers; and if it be God's will, surely it is to be desired that the ethereal mind be clothed upon with that heavenly house, and to dwell with Christ is infinitely best.

Sometimes old age is brought before us with such hues of loveliness upon it, that it seems a thing to be devoutly longed for. When the eye still shines with intellectual lustre; when the countenance is stamped with the impress of true goodness; when benignity still sheds its hallowed lustre o'er the face; and when the speech is full of kindness, purity, and heaven.

When like a shock of corn, the yellowness of full maturity is manifest; when the lingering days of a rich and green old age are spent in acts of piety towards God, and in deeds of mercy to mankind.

When the hoary pilgrim leaning on his staff proceedeth on his heavenward course, and looks with holy scorn on all the sublunary things of earth and time.

Dignified! thrice happy is the man, who thus can tell of threescore years acquaintance with celestial things: who contemplates with joy the way that providence hath led him, and who is waiting in hourly expectation of the coming of his Lord.

Who treads with faltering footstep on the margin of the tomb, but ever lives by faith within the vestibule of heaven.

How oft, alas! is age presented to us laden only with the vices of a mispent life,—where sin has left its traces deep in every lineament of the face,—where threescore years and ten have been abused, perverted to purposes of wickedness and vile ingratitude,—where probation lengthened has been despised, and God's long suffering treated as divine indifference.

Where passion has the ascendancy, and often where monstrous avarice holds in her iron grasp with increased tenacity, and sordid idolatry, the earthly dust of riches.

Where conscience hath slumbered long, and all the emotions of the soul are deadened, and no concern is felt in reference to the everlasting destinies awaiting it in future worlds.

Horrible, most horrible, is such a scene! it resembleth the tree robbed of its verdure and its foliage, and smitten by the electric lightning, awaiting the woodman's stroke as only fuel fit for burning.

For in that holy book where only truth is written, do we read, "though the sinner should survive a hundred years, yet shall he die accursed."

Then aged reader, see to it that the end of thy protracted life is answered; that thou dost the fruit of righteousness bear unto old age; that thou hast not lived in vain; that thy memory may be enshrined in the hearts of the good and pious when thou shalt moulder with thy mother earth; that thou hast a gracious title, and a holy meetness for a better world.

Thus favoured wait until thy Lord shall come, and then with joy take full possession of the rest thy God hath in love prepared for all his saints.

EARTHLY MUTABILITIES.

How graphically does the inspired teacher remind us "That the fashion of this world passeth away!" and does not all history establish the truth of this declaration! On what can we fix the eye of contemplation, and say, this is permanent, and will not be affected by change?

Every where we see the fragments of former times, and the lingering remains of bygone glories.

Ancient monarchies and empires that once stood forth arrayed in earthly stateliness and magnificence, had their rise and noon-day splendour, and then, some gradually, and others rapidly, sunk into decay; and many have become obsolete, and are only imperfectly traceable by the aid of what history furnisheth.

Those ancient cities of idolatry and learning in Egypt, Babylon, Nineveh, the Jerusalem of former dispensations, Herculaneum, Pompeii—who can linger around their sites or ramble among their ruins, and not perceive the fragility and uncertainty of earthly grandeur?

And has it not been equally so with human greatness? How have princes and heroes been compelled to descend to the lowest stations of life.

A monarch one day; a beggar, a slave, the next.

A hero leading on the conquering host; now a captive in degradation and chains.

Rich, invested with splendour, and surrounded with fawning admirers; and now the victim of adversity, and the subject of neglect or scorn.

The youthful Hebrew under Pharaoh guiding all the affairs of mighty Egypt, the babe proscribed by murderous enactments, nourished in the royal palace—the shepherd boy of Jesse's family made monarch over Israel; and on the other side the cruel Adonibezek, a mangled captive crawling 'neath his conqueror's table—the envious Haman exalted to the gallows he had reared for Mordecai—Job in solitary sorrow, with all his former earthly good a wreck—Nebuchadnezzar herding with the cattle of the field—the accusers of the holy Daniel given as the hungry lions' prey—Herod descending from his throne to be devoured alive by worms, are some of those instructive instances the scriptures furnish.

And every history, sacred and profane, ancient or modern, could the list of striking mutabilities extend.

Happy in the enjoyment of the social blessings of life, with many gladsome faces to make the domestic circle joyous, now sorrowful and bereaved, and household gladness exchanged for grief and anguish; hale and vigorous, buoyant with physical vivacity, now debilitated and reclining on the couch of sickness, a prey to languishing and pain; with many golden dreams of future days and years of brightness, and now in the midst of the illusive imaginings, smitten with the stroke of fell mortality, and consigned to the gloomy, silent tomb.

How vain then to reckon aught sure and stable that pertains to earthly things.

The moon in all her waxings and her wanings—the ever restless, flowing, ebbing tide—the querulous winds, and atmospheric constant changes, are not less certain than the varying scenes of earth and time.

Thou mayest know much of what is past, and something of the present, but presume not to reckon what to-morrow will produce.

Prosperity or poverty, joy or sorrow, health or sickness, life or death, is only known to him who is the great and wise Disposer and Arbiter of all things.

To-morrow is pregnant with a thousand dire events, which if but known to-day would take away all present peace and joy, and overwhelm with horror and dismay.

How wisely is it ordered that the events of the present only are allowed to press upon us, and these, by hopes of better days, are often borne with holy patience and calm submission to the will of heaven.

Then forget not, reader, that the mutable of earth includeth all,—all that can be placed among our earthly good.

I speak not now of honours, wealth, and things that gratify the senses; I speak of friends beloved—of kindred dear—of bosom relatives; I speak of health and vigour—of mental soundness; I speak of life itself.

Oh! fancy not that aught of these is to be reckoned on, but rather keep thy eye of faith on him who is the changeless, satisfying portion of his saints, his name—"I am," his great prerogative—"Who changeth not."

HEALTH.

Who can tell the worth of health, or overvalue its influence on the physical, intellectual, and moral enjoyments of mankind?

It is the invisible source of beauty, the secret channel of vigour, the talisman of earthly bliss.

It sparkles in the eye, blooms in the cheek, vermilions the lip, nerves the arm, and imparts elasticity and firmness to the gait.

It gives buoyancy to the spirits, activity to the mind, and energy to the thoughts.

It is the poor man's earthly portion, and the rich man's greatest luxury.

It is welcome in every clime, and nourished on every hearth.

Numerous are the blessings that follow in its train, and legion is the title of the ills that approach at its retiring.

Few have it long, continuously, and in perfection; and none ever its rightful value know, until its absence has taught the painful lesson.

Some have maintained it in regions of infected air, and many have lost it in salubrious lands.

When impaired, it is often of difficult restoration, and sometimes mines of gold, would have been given for its establishment.

Many have trifled with it, and exposed it for exchange in every mart of riot and folly.

Luxury is one of its direst foes, and sensual enjoyment its greatest enemy.

Pamper thy flesh, and enervation and disease will soon be thy companion. Many dishes and delicious viands have often betrayed it with a Delilah's embrace, and a Judas-like kiss.

Inappropriate costume has often exposed it, beds of down wasted it, and ease and mid-day indolence poisoned it to its core.

Art thou anxious to retain this priceless guest, this heaven-sent blessing ?—

Avoid the midnight air, the over-heated room, the noxious atmosphere.

Avoid late carousings, the rich spread banquet, and all excess.

Avoid protracted slumbers, and delicate attentions, and the insidious cordial.

Avoid the baneful stimulant, the sparkling cup, and the soothing opiate.

Avoid the frequent use of drugs, for they create a necessity for their continuance.

Avoid distracting cares, especially that porch of hell —the gambling room.

Avoid excessive passions.

Avoid in meats and drinks, however tempting they may be, that which excites, inflames, and spreads a maddening influence, through all the channels of thy system.

Avoid, if possible, protracted toil, continued watchings, and labours over much.

Avoid a fretful pining state of mind, and discontent, that bane of every good.

Avoid recurring scenes of guilt and flee from all that would defile thy conscience.

Avoid the way of the transgressor, for that is health's antagonist, overcome by which men live not half their days.

Avoid the idiotic thought that heaven will give this boon to men who live in violation of its laws.

Seek it in the well-aired bedroom, and the hard mattress, and in the ambrosial breath of morn.

Seek it in the homely meal, in useful labour, and in physical activity.

Seek it in the chrystal stream, that living fluid sent by the Father of our mercies to be the beverage of mankind.

Seek it in oft ablutions, and keep the pores, those countless avenues of health, well cleansed and braced in water from the spring.

Seek it in joyfulness of heart, in virtue's paths, and in wisdom's ways.

Seek it walking in the sunshine of purest mercy and true benevolence.

Seek it in earnest prayer from Him, who giveth all things richly for our good.

And yet perchance with all thy skill and care it may forsake thee. Then seek its only substitute—heaven's genial sunshine, God's most gracious smile, and hope well grounded of a blest and glorious immortality.

These will console thee when earthly vigour fails, and these support when pains severe assail thee. Then, when heart and flesh shall fail, God, in whom thou trustest will sustain, and of thy heart the portion be, both now and ever.

BEREAVEMENTS.

This is emphatically a world of change. All sublunary things like the panoramic scene *pass* away. Kingdoms are dissolved, empires vanish, and nations are no more.

The social circle, the family hearth, are invaded by the king of terrors; and friends and kindred are scattered like the leaves before the autumnal blast.

The aged sire laden with threescore years and ten, or even fourscore years, like the rugged oak, venerable in his sphere, and reverenced by the generation growing up around him, at length yields up the ghost, and is buried with his fathers.

The matron with her silvered locks and benignant countenance—the mother of a noble band, a household relic now, and prized and blessed by all around her, like the setting moon, sinks beneath the horizon and shines no more on earth. Her dignity now transferred, is seen in the step of many a noble-minded son, and in many maternal hearts, her gentleness and love still glow, and her mantle of domestic virtues now rests on those who fill the sphere in which she lived and moved.

But what is this excites the wailings of a numerous class, where the young and the aged mingle their sighs together?

One in the vigour of his manhood, whose bones were full of marrow, and limbs apparently of iron or of mar-

ble—the fell blast of fierce disease assailed him, and there prostrated he lies a monument of earthly impotence and vanity.

See too how desolated that Eden of domestic bliss, that garden where grow and thrive so many household flowers of loveliness. There the mother and the wife, font of so much joy, and centre of domestic hope and bliss to all around; yet as the sun, mid noon-tide splendour and meridian day, goes down at once. What blissful hopes, what cherished sweet anticipations are there, enshrouded in the veriest darkness.

Or shall we speak of infant loveliness exchanged for sickly wanness in the very morning of its beauteous innocence, or of dear fraternal bonds, dissolving like a rope of sand, or of the elevated, kind, and genial friendships, which had like kindred drops, adhered together; now scattered here and there like spray before the eastern wind.

Bereavements! who hath not had lessons taught him in this school of bitterness? Who has not bowed his soul, and in the depths of sorrowing anguish exclaimed, "Alas! my father, mother, brother, child, or friend."

How many portions of our family inheritance, now moulder in the silent tomb, and that wide yawning grave will never say "enough" till all are buried in its fathomless abyss.

Bereavements often shock, alarm, and overwhelm with sorrow. But wherefore is it? Because on mortal gifts we wrote with love's deceivings,—"immortality."

We whispered this thought, that in our nest of social comforts, till distant advanced age, we, undisturbed

should live, and calmly die. That the fair mountain of our bright and sunny pleasures would ne'er remove. That the inscriptions on our delights were written with the diamond on the marble rock. But while we reckoned and cherished all these hopes, our nest was torn and scattered, our mountain shaken to its base, and deep submerged in sorrow's watery foam. And the inscription of happiness for years to come, on flitting sand was written, and every letter was effaced by the rising tide of social trouble.

Forget not the tenure of uncertainty on which thy dearest good is held. Mutation is the creature's very nature, and change its birthright, and decay its certain destiny.

But friends removed and out of sight, and hearing, and embrace, "still live, and move, and have their being."

Not lost in deep annihilation's gloomy shades. If but in Christ and covenant with God, when they put forth from the shores of earth and time, like the majestic vessel in full sail, they entered that bright haven of immortality and bliss, where neither sin, nor change, nor sorrow, can invade.

Thither by spiritual communings, you may yet approach and visit them. And from thence by invisible access, they may come near to us, and form a part of the ministering host who sympathize with all salvation's heirs.

And but a transient day at most, and the same winds that severed them from us will bear us to them; then sorrow not as without hope.

Adore the Providence enwrapped in clouds and

mystery; the sun will soon shine forth, and then thou shalt both know, adore, and satisfied, exclaim :—"The Lord! he hath done all things well."

TIME.

Time is measured duration; the material of our being, and the index of our progression to eternity.

There was, before time begun its course; there will be, when time shall be no longer.

Time has been a favourite theme with philosophers, moralists, and sages. Some have extolled it much, but none ever knew its intrinsic worth. The light of eternity must reveal it, the day of doom declare it, and all eternity re-echo it.

Time past, how transient; time present, how evanescent; time to come, with any how uncertain. How different in the lessons it teaches, and the impressions it makes.

The child wastes it in play, and knoweth not its worth; the anxious youth would hasten its course, and the aged put a drag upon its wheels.

Deferred hope, and endured pain biddeth it fly; enjoyment would arrest its flight, and the condemned malefactor is overwhelmed at its velocity.

So intrinsically excellent, it is dealt out in moments, and two contemporary ones never existed at the same period.

Its travel is regular, silent but sure. It never wearies, nor halts, nor turns aside; on, on, is its motto, and on, on, it has sped for nearly six thousand years.

A thousand years were given to the antediluvians; one hundred and twenty to the patriarchs; but thirty are the measure of the modern generations of mankind.

Time is the space of man's existence, the bounds of his probation, and his seed time for eternity.

In possession, it may be improved and enjoyed; gone, it is irrecoverably lost.

Used, it blesses; neglected, it condemns; abused it leaves its curse behind.

Time should be redeemed from vain conversation—frivolous pursuits—foolishness of life.

Time should be anticipated by prudent forethought, improved by holy diligence, and laid up for serious reflection.

The records of time will furnish the subjects for judgment, and influence the destinies of eternity.

Reader, what thinkest thou of time? how hast thou spent time past, how art thou using time present, and how purposing for time to come?

Know its intrinsic value, be taught its immense importance, and so number thy days as to apply thy heart unto wisdom.

DEATH.

Death! what art thou? In the language of poetical imaginativeness, the fell destroyer—the insatiable monster—the king of terrors!

Personification of all terribleness, concentration of all horror, and subject of all abhorrence.

Insidious in thy approach, fearful in thy gloomy pageantry, and remorseless in thy attacks.

Successful archer! with thy arrows of desolation, relentless warrior! with thy armour of destruction.

Nature's enemy with thy war-whoop of vengeance.

The dread of every living thing, the devastator of earth, the blight of the world, the gorger of the grave, the excluded of heaven, and the kidnapper of hell.

With hideous form, and sepulchral voice, and icy hand, and ruthless arm, and heartless bosom!

Hoary-headed despot! thy reign of terror has been extended through thousands of years, o'er every land, in every nation, and among every tongue.

Thou Ishmaelite to every class, and order, and degree, and age of men!

Thou destroyer of infants, thou assassin of the aged, thou murderer of all!

Thou invader of the domestic hearth, of the social circle, and of the church of God!

Thou devourer of talent, and genius, and influence, and worth!

Thou executioner of the vile, thou dethroner of kings, thou leveller of subjects, and thou equalizer of all!

The fear of the wise, the horror of the foolish, the compeer of the assassin, the gulph of the suicide, and the gain of the saint.

All thy horrors are the fruit of sin; all thy terrors the denunciations of the law; all thy power of evil unforgiven guilt; all thy darkness the want of hope.

Thus have poets sung thy dreaded fame, thy fearful character, but what does tranquil reason, and sound philosophy, and sacred truth aver?

Reason says, thou art a mere negation—the want of being; philosophy, the terminus of life's short journey; and revelation, the rest of toil, and sleep of man's exhausted wearied frame.

Death, thy days are numbered, thy overthrow predicted, thy ruin certain! The man in whom tabernacled the divinity, chased thee from thy strongholds. He staid thee on thy march to the sepulchre, and bade the widow's son of Nain arise. He dissolved thy fatal chain, in raising to buoyant life, the ruler's little maid. He expelled thee from thy strong hold, when with the voice of majesty and power almighty, he exclaimed, "Lazarus come forth."

And more than all, Christ overcame thee, when he lay in silent darkness in the new hewn tomb, and when thou seemedst to have slain the prince of life; and with victory and triumph, he arose and grappling with thee in thine own domains, he worsted thee; snapped thy massive chains; broke to shivers thine ancient sceptre threw back thy gloomy doors; let in the light of resurrection's glory,

and came forth exclaiming, "Though dead, I am alive again, and have the keys of hell and death for evermore!"

Yes! death now thou art tributary to the king of Zion, the Lord of life and glory; with all the fruit of sin, thou shalt at last be cast deep into the burning lake, and life and immortality shall triumph evermore.

THE JUDGMENT.

Hark! the distant thunders roll, the earth reels with fright, the mighty blast is heard—No more be time!

The firmament of heaven is darkened, the sun in sackcloth clad, the moon as blood!

The crumbling elements dissolve and melt with fervent heat; and one fierce sheet of flame enwraps the globe.

'Tis Dooms' day! and now, the destiny of each and all, hangs on the lips of him, before whose face the earth and heavens now pass away.

'Mid air, the crowded masses of innumerable human beings congregate together.

The great white throne of infinite and everlasting judicature is now set up; angelic legions, as the officers of justice, surround it.

The books are opened—the records of a world's transactions!

Another book—the book of life, in which are registered in characters of light, the truly great, and just, and good, of every age, and clime, and colour.

The earth has fled far, far away. In cloud and smoke the sea by evaporation has escaped.

No earth or ocean is found or seen; mountains, and hills, and rocks, and monuments have passed away for ever,

> "And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,
> Left not a wreck behind."

But how diverse the character of those around the throne! how earthly form and etiquette are now forgotten!

There, in close connexion, stand the monarch and the beggar—the master and his slave—the philosopher and the fool—the high and low—the great and small—the rich and poor—the sons of rustic homeliness and the fair daughters of high nobility and state—the judge and the criminal—the sire and the son—the father and his children—and the minister and his flock.

What dread, and horror, and dismay, o'erwhelm the multitude!

What shrieks of anguish, what rending pleas, what torturing agony, what cries of deep despair!

And yet amid the countless myriads behold a happy class of sainted spirits without alarm.

This is the day for which they lived, and to which they hastened.

For this, they earnestly believed, and hoped, and prayed.

The Judge, their friend and brother; in covenant with God their expectations cannot perish.

The saints of Christ who suffered with and for him, now must reign.

Despised, and hated, and maltreated—now co-heirs with Christ they judge the world.

Beckoned to his side, they sit on thrones of honour; confessed by him, they now become the envy of the world's infatuated millions.

Their names pronounced with joy, their brows with shining crowns adorned, enrobed in vestments of purest white, they enter in with Christ their Lord, and dwell for ever in his kingdom.

But ah! the sorrow, woe, and misery of those on whom the fearful sentence is pronounced, "Depart from me," from light, and joy, and hope, "ye cursed," who refused the blood of saving mercy, "into everlasting fire," the lake of hottest flame, enkindled by the wrath of heaven, "prepared for the devil and his angels," the designed abode of fallen spirits, but made your own by foul conspiracy, and union with that hapless rank of dark intelligences.

Then, as the angels execute the awful sentence, and cast them down to regions black and terrible, how one united scream of horror, louder than ten thousand thunders, terminates this overwhelming dark reality of judgment, to which, reader, thou art hastening.

Be wise while wisdom will avail, and whate'er thou gainest or losest in time, secure through faith in Jesus a final lot of glory with the blest.

HEAVEN.

Heaven! a sacred word identified with our first infantile prayers. The dwelling of "our Father," whose name maternal piety taught us to lisp with reverence and praise.

Heaven! that exalted locality which is the residence of angels, the home of the beatified, and the palace of Jehovah.

Heaven! the temple of the universe, the *sanctum sanctorum*,—the holiest of all.

Heaven! the Eden of delight, the paradise of consummated bliss, the inheritance of the glorified.

Heaven! the region of cloudless radiant light, unvarying noon, and resplendent endless day.

Heaven! the goal of the spiritual racer, the rest of the weary, the home of the pilgrim, and the eternal habitation and dwelling of the family divine.

Heaven! with its thrones, dominions, powers; with its services of joy, its worship of purity and perfection, and its society of the dignified and happy.

Heaven! with its river and tree of life, with its verdant plains and flowery mounts.

Heaven! with its gates of pearl, and streets of gold, and walls of jasper.

Heaven! the region of health, and beauty, and holiness, and rapture.

Heaven! with its fellowship of perfect, kindred, happy minds; with its magnificent revelations, its fulness of joy, and its pleasures for evermore.

Heaven! the home without sin, or pain, or fear, or sorrow; without a tempter, or a snare; without anguish, or death, or sepulchres.

How transporting its scenes, how melodious its music, how rapturous its songs, how blissful its society, how uninterrupted its blessedness, how unending its glories, how sublimely august, and holy, and infinite, its monarch—Jehovah of Hosts!

Heaven! with its *one* door of entrance to the inhabitants of earth—even Christ the Mediator; with its *one* theme of rejoicing—even the Lamb that was slain; with its *one* object of vision—God enshrined in glorified humanity; with its *one* class of inhabitants—even the saints of the Most High, "who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of Lamb.

Heaven! object of my highest ambition, my holiest desires, and my most ardent prayers. I will seek it by faith in him who is the only way to it. I will travel to it on the royal highway of evangelical obedience. I will anticipate it by cheering hope, wait for it by patient perseverance in well doing; and then with the really dignified, and great, and holy, enjoy it through the ages of eternity.

That this hope deceive me not, I will seek enrolment in its book of life; I will commit myself to him, who will keep in inviolable security; wait for the watchword of death; and borne on the wings of celestial attendants, enter through the merits of the divine Mediator, into the joy of my Lord.

ETERNITY.

Duration without beginning, without measure, without end.

Eternity is alone inhabited by Jehovah, for he was before all things by his being, as he is above all things by his majesty and glory. Eternity is beyond human comprehension, and too difficult for clear definition, and can only be faintly shadowed forth by imaginative representation. It is a boundless horizon, an unfathomable deep, an inexhaustible maze.

The ring, without beginning, or joining, or end has been selected to describe it. Proper eternity, God only knows and understands, prospective eternity, he has connected with the nature of angels and men.

God ever was, and is, and will be for ever.

Angels and men were not till they were created; but invested with immortality they are, and will be evermore.

Time had its origin, and will have its termination; immortality its origin only; eternity neither.

Eternity is duration that defies comparison, exceeds numeration, and baffles the understanding. Were millions of ages numerous as the sands on Arabia's deserts, or as the drops in the ocean, or as atoms in the material universe, or as rays in the sun, or as thoughts in all intelligences; yet they would be as nothing to eternity.

Profound thought, overwhelming idea, inconceivable theme! Yet every child of man is sailing towards this region, travelling towards this country, hastening towards this goal. The frivolous and the serious, the jester and the sage, the fool and the philosopher, the profane and

the devout, the saint and the infidel, are all alike moving onwards to eternity.

One man enters on it stupidly, another thoughtlessly, many unexpectedly, hosts unpreparedly, the pious only wisely. Eternity opens its massive dungeon door to the impenitent; and its gates of light to the humble believer.

Eternity is down, down, down, lower and lower, blacker and blacker, to those who die in wickedness; but it riseth higher, and higher, and higher, in an atmosphere of unmingled light and glory, to the children of God. Beneath, are eternal cells of horror, eternal chains of darkness, eternal flames of misery, eternal pangs of despair, and eternal companions of woe.

Above, there are eternal mansions of light, eternal robes of purity, eternal songs of joy, eternal streams of delight, eternal co-heirs of bliss, and an eternal crown of glory that fadeth not away. Rivers, with eternal springs of rapture; trees, with eternal fruits of pleasure; worship, with eternal rounds of services, worlds, with eternal themes for study, contemplation, and enjoyment. A God for eternal adoration, delight, and praise! Reader, what thinkest thou of eternity? Art thou inconsiderate or wise, reckless or prudent, prepared or negligent? Art thou bringing it near by the telescope of faith, and enjoying it by the anticipations of hope, and enraptured with it by the emotions of desire? Or fearest thou it, and livest in dread of its approach, and in terror of its arrival?

Trust in the merits of thy Surety, which eternity cannot impair; in the mercy of thy God which eternity will not exhaust; and clothe thyself in the garments of holiness, which in eternity will not wax old.

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